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ASIAN CUP 2012
PRELIMINARY DRAW

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER?

PHOTO: SYDNEY LOW



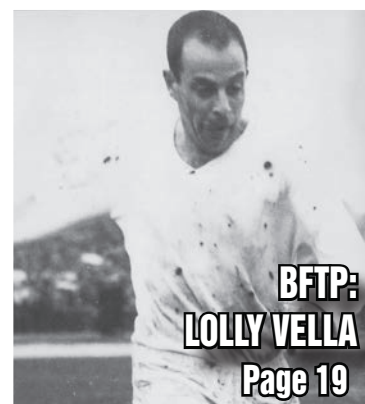
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The Future of Football

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Penalty Box to Soap Box: Journey of a Non-Ranger

By Adrian Deans

From his earliest days, Lawrie McKinna wanted to play for Glasgow Rangers. Cut him and he bled blue, Ally McCoist was Santa Claus and Ibrox the highest of all heavens. Alas, he never got to play for Rangers, but he did get to play against them.

* * *

To call someone a journeyman might in some quarters be regarded as a bit of an insult. It implies that someone has never quite 'made it' but has been forced to scratch by in the lower levels of a profession.

If you look only at the facts, you could be forgiven for suggesting that Lawrie McKinna is the quintessential journeyman: wanted to play for Rangers, but played for Kilmarnock, Heidelberg and Parramatta Power. Turned to coaching and coached Northern Spirit, Central Coast Mariners, Chengdu Blades and Chongqing in the Chinese Superleague. It's not Barcelona but it's still professional football. Verdict: journeyman.

But what sort of idiot only relies on the facts?

Lawrie McKinna is more than just a journeyman because he makes a contribution that goes far beyond that of ordinary footballers and coaches. In a game famous for its hatreds (even in Australia, FFS!) Lawrie is universally well-liked and respected and would be easily one of the most popular personalities in Australian football.

His eagerness to engage is demonstrated by his habit at Mariners games of always going over to talk to the opposing fans. I am a Mariners fan myself but I have a few mates in the Cove and when they visited Bluetongue a couple of years ago Lawrie came across, recognised me and stopped for a chat. I introduced him to some of my Coveite chums and for the next five minutes or so the game was almost forgotten as Lawrie exchanged banter with about 20 blokes who clearly loved him to bits. If Kevin Muscat or Joel Griffiths tried that stunt they'd be torn to bits.



Lawrie and childhood sweetheart Christine happy on the Central Coast.

But it's not just his friendly demeanour and 'jock-ularity' that endears him to the fans. This is a man who knows a thing or two about football and has achieved something in the game. The Mariners have always been the club with the least resources, in a region with the lowest population and which might also be described as economically depressed. A traditional rugby league heartland, Lawrie turned the Central Coast into a football powerhouse punching way above its weight and achieving one Premiership, two Grand Finals and a trip into Asia during his five seasons in charge. Brisbane, in contrast, had done none of this in its pre-Postecoglou era.

So what is he up to now?
LM: I'm back on the Central Coast as General Manager of Football at the Mariners. They asked me to come back when they knew I was leaving China because, at the time, they thought Arnie was probably going to Sydney. Therefore they thought they might need a familiar face to give a bit of stability at the club, maybe to give support to a new, younger coach.

GW: Going back to your Scottish roots, are you disappointed you never played for

Rangers?
LM: Would you believe no-one's ever asked me that before? My dream, since I was five years old, was to play for Rangers, but playing for Kilmarnock was at least part of the dream coming true. My first ever professional game was for Killie Reserves against Rangers Reserves at Ibrox. A week before I'd been a fan singing in the stand and suddenly Rangers were the enemy! We got flogged and I was just in awe. I never played for Rangers but I reckon I achieved all I could with what I had.

GW: What were your impressions of the Australian game when you first started playing in the old NSL?
LM: My first game in the NSL was for Heidelberg against Preston Macedonia. There were police on horses keeping the fans apart! It was like an Old Firm match and a bit of an eye-opener. The South Melbourne derby was always colourful and exciting...and I scored the odd goal in that. The football itself was very tough and physical. The stadia and surfaces were mostly shite in comparison with the A-League but there were plenty of excellent players like Charlie Egan, Ange Postecoglou, Stevie Blair. My hardest opponent was Dave Macintosh of Melbourne Croatia. You knew you'd come off battered and bruised but you'd

always have a beer and a laugh after.

GW: People sometimes talk about an impasse between Old Soccer and New Football. If you were head of the FFA, what's the one thing you would do to bring them together?
LM: I'd emphasise the history. The A-League's only seven seasons old but we've been playing football in Australia for well over a hundred years. Traditions and roots have to start somewhere but the A-League clubs have to recognise the contribution of the old clubs.

GW: What has been your proudest achievement in coaching?
LM: The obvious answer is winning the Premier's Plate and making two Grand Finals with the Mariners, but really the most satisfying thing was my last game for Northern Spirit. The players hadn't been paid for four months and the club was being wound up, so keeping that team together and getting to the end of the season was a massive achievement on a personal level. We won that last game 3 - 0 against Adelaide City and Alex Tobin got a standing ovation. Just magic.



Lawrie playing for Kilmarnock in the early 80s

GW: And your most disappointing?
LM: Never to have won a Grand Final. I've been in three...two for the Mariners and one as assistant to Davie Mitchell for Sydney United.

GW: What was it like coaching in the Chinese Superleague?

LM: Good players, good stadia, good crowds. The cultural experience was fantastic. We're just so glad we had that year in China. I'd wanted to do it since going there for pre-season tournaments back in the NSL days.

GW: What was the hardest thing to get used to in China?
LM: There's an old Chinese curse that says: may you be fated to live in interesting times...and my time was certainly interesting. The hardest thing was management interference with decision making. Everything was out of my hands and the Catch 22 for China is they want change...they bring in foreign coaches to effect change...but they won't allow them to actually do their jobs, so nothing changes.

GW: How long before an Australian team wins the Asian Champions League?
LM: It's hard to compete at that level but we're not that far away. Adelaide have shown that we can be competitive but the salary cap puts us at a major disadvantage compared with what the Asian clubs have to spend.

GW: If Australia was to have a 10 year plan to win the World Cup in 2022, what is the single-most important thing we'd have to put in place to make that feasible?
LM: Everything has to be under one banner. From FFA through to state level, AIS, everyone has to be focussed on what is the best thing for the game and not just individuals or clubs.

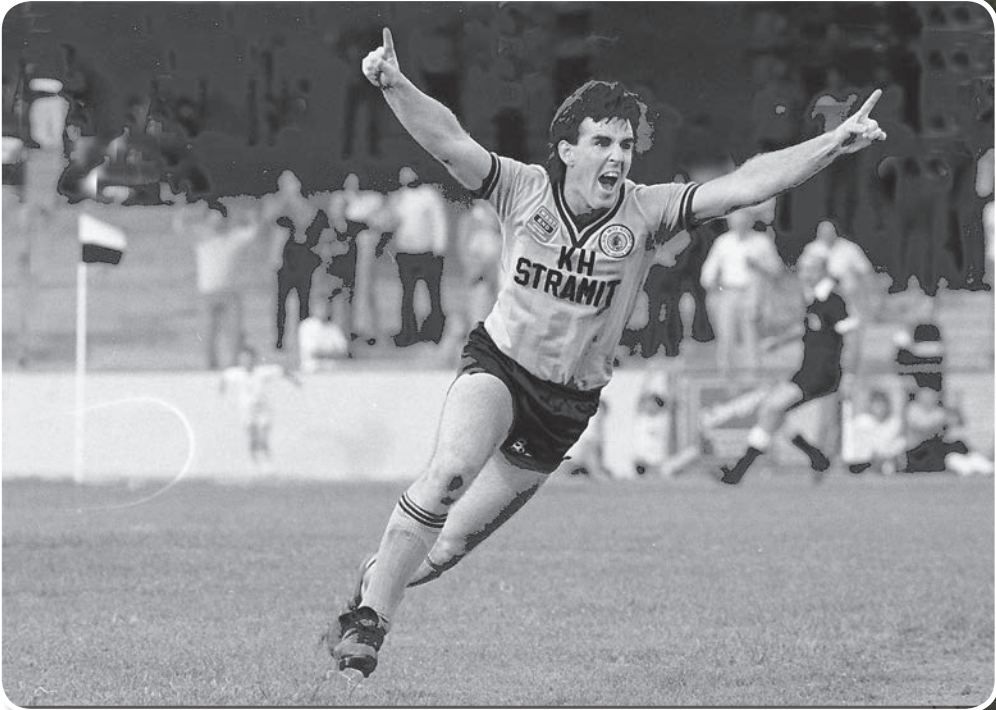
GW: Besides family, friends and football, what do you miss most about Scotland?
LM: What else is there, besides family, friends and football? I'm just so lucky that I live in Australia. Moving here was the best decision we ever made.

GW: So when Scotland played Australia in a recent friendly, you were going for Australia that day?
LM: Always, deep down, I'm very proud of my heritage and where I come from. That'll always be there so it didn't matter who won that day. I was always going to be happy.

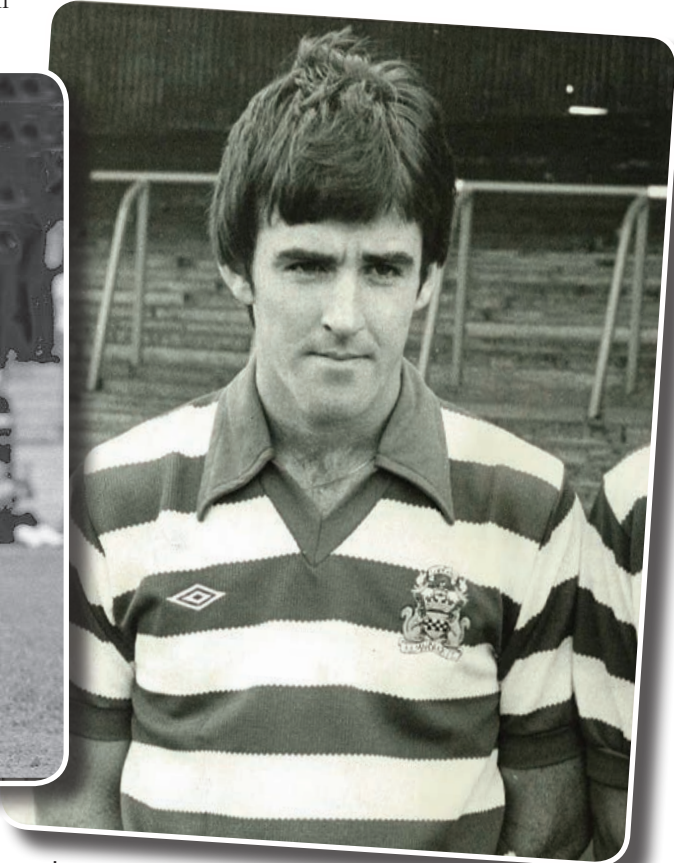
GW: That sounds like a very politically astute answer. You've just been elected Mayor of Gosford. What on earth is Lawrie McKinna doing in politics, and what do you want to achieve?
LM: The last 15 years I've been coaching in Australian football and I've survived the politics of that, so it seemed like a natural next step. [Grins cheekily] Seriously, I've always felt connected to the community of the Central Coast and I just hope to bring a bit of common sense to the council. I want to make a contribution.

GW: He may have dreamt of playing for Rangers, but little did that five-year-old growing up near Glasgow know that he was destined to be Mayor of Gosford on the other side of the planet.
No-one can argue that Lawrie McKinna makes a contribution. Whether its coaching football, standing for council or getting his chest waxed for charity, Lawrie is always doing something to get involved. And journeyman? Count the miles, but Lawrie is so much more than that. The Central Coast is lucky to have him but so is Australian football generally. Rangers don't know what they missed.

It's not pretty but if you want to see Lawrie getting his chest waxed, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBN-IlkMRdA>



Lawrie McKinna celebrates his first goal for Heidelberg United against APIA Leichhardt (12-Apr-1987). Photo: JOHN PUNSHON



Lawrie in Kilmarnock colours

AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015 Preliminary Draw Conducted

The road to AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015™ became clearer on Tuesday as the Preliminary Draw for Asia's biggest football event was conducted in Melbourne.

Twenty teams were drawn into five groups of four teams each. Teams will play home and away against each of their group opponents between February 2013 and March 2014.

The winner and runners-up from each group will qualify for the AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015™ Finals along with the best third-placed team from among all the groups. These 11 teams will join automatic qualifiers Australia, Japan, Korea Republic, DPR Korea along with the winner of the AFC Challenge Cup 2014.

"The preliminary draw has thrown up some great contests, and we are sure to see some exciting matches over the next 18 months," said AFC Acting President Zhang Jilong. "We're thrilled that AFC's newest member, Australia, will be hosting Asia's flagship national team competition for the first time."

Frank Lowy, Chairman of Football Federation Australia and the Local Organising Committee said that Australia was determined to deliver the best Asian Cup yet and promised a festival of football.

"This will be the largest football competition ever staged in our country. It will be a feast of interna-



Former Australian Soccerroos Alan Davidson and John Aloisi with the AFC Executive Director of Competitions John Windsor conduct the draw at the AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015 Preliminary Draw and Logo Launch at the Sofitel Hotel in Melbourne on Tuesday. Photo: SYDNEY LOW



The Premier of Victoria Ted Baillieu speaks at the launch. Photo: SYDNEY LOW



The AFC Asian Cup Australia 2015™ Qualifiers Groups are:

- Group A: Jordan, Syria, Oman, Singapore
- Group B: IR Iran, Kuwait, Thailand, Lebanon
- Group C: Iraq, China PR, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia
- Group D: Qatar, Bahrain, Yemen, Malaysia
- Group E: Uzbekistan, UAE, Vietnam, Hong Kong

tional football, and we're confident that Australians will get behind all the 16 teams, as we have shown for other major events."

Mr Lowy also thanked State and Commonwealth Governments for their support of the event. "We are working with five Governments to deliver AFC Asian Cup Australia

2015. Their support and expertise has been invaluable," he said.

Premier of Victoria, Ted Baillieu, said that Melbourne would be a festival of sport in January 2015. "Melbourne will once again be the centre of world sport in hosting both AFC Asian Cup 2015 matches and the Australian Open at the same

time. The AFC Asian Cup is another jewel in Melbourne's major events crown."

Matches for the competition proper will take place in Victoria, New South Wales, ACT and Queensland, with venues to be confirmed in early 2013. It is expected that tickets will go on sale in early 2014.

AFC Asian Cup Organising Committee Chairman His Royal Highness Tengku Abdullah Ibni Sultan Ahmad Shah praised Australia and the Local Organising Committee for preparations to date. "The AFC was impressed with the progress update provided by Michael Brown and his

team. While there is much work still to be done, we are confident that Australia will deliver a very special competition, one that will leave a lasting legacy for the game both in Australia and across Asia."

Lolly Vella, (7 August 1933–29 September 2012)

By Roy Hay

Emmanuel (Lolly) Vella and his brother Tony arrived in Australia from Malta in the mid-1950s. Tony was an established player with Floriana and the Maltese national team.

Tony worked in a wool store in South Kensington and decided that was better than as a corporal in Malta. George Cross was then in the second division and Tony signed instead for JUST at the urging of Henry Chatka one of the JUST officials. Tony stayed with JUST from 1955 to 1959 and his wife and two daughters joined him as did Lolly. Lolly was also a player with Floriana and a Maltese international. Together they helped JUST win the club's first championship of the First Division in 1957. Both brothers played for Victoria and Lolly had two games for Australia against New Zealand in 1958 and matches against visiting clubs. In 1958 Tony became player-coach at JUST and continued in that role at several other clubs.

George Cross won the second division that year and hence promotion to what became the first season of the State League. The Vella brothers starred in the Malta team which knocked off Italy in the final of the Laidlaw World Cup in 1957, with Tony in midfield and Lolly on the wing. At the start of the 1959 season George Cross signed the Vella brothers and won the Sun Cup at the start of the year, the State League Cup and the Dockerty Cup and narrowly missed the league title thanks to the stellar form of the Dutch club Wilhelmina.

Lolly was in the Ampol Cup final



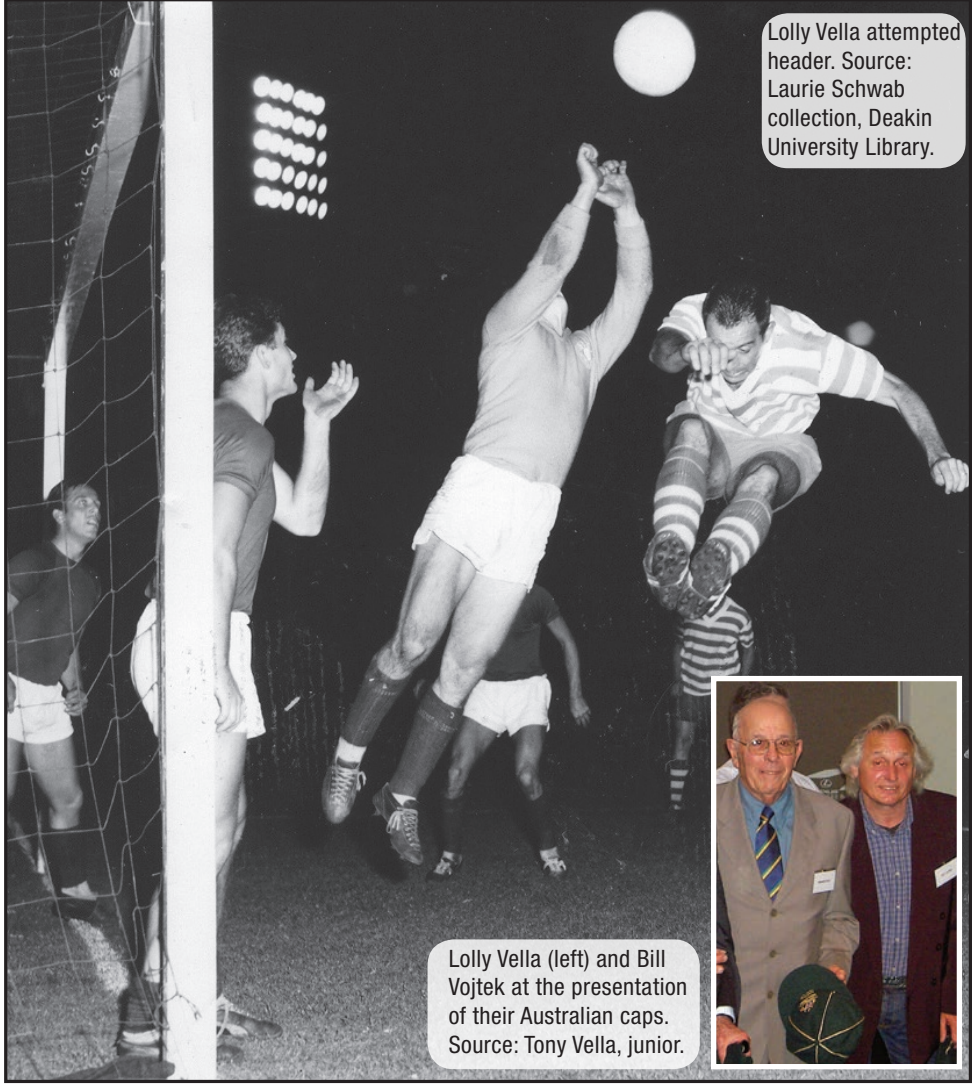
Lolly and Tony Vella. Source: Milan Ninovic.

with George Cross in early 1962 and played for Victoria against Queensland in June 1962. It was while playing with George Cross that Lolly broke his leg in a match against JUST. George Cross did not think he would recover and during the 1962 season the brothers moved to Polonia, but Tony was not happy with a playing only role, so he moved on to Lions in 1963. Lolly's Polonia beat Tony's Lions in the night cup final. Lolly helped Polonia finish as runner-up in the Australia Cup in 1963. In 1964 Lolly was back at George Cross, where he continued in 1965, but then returned to JUST for the 1966 season, playing alongside Rale Rasic, Frank Micic and Billy Rice. Lolly also had a season at St Albans and when he finally hung up his boots at the age of 36 he coached a junior team at Green Gully for a couple of years, while Tony was the senior coach.

Outside football Lolly was an expeditor at Massey Ferguson, the tractor and agricultural machinery company, where he worked for over 30 years

retiring at the age of 57. Lolly was very committed to his family of three sons, Carmelo, Tony and Lolly junior, daughter Iris and his wife Jean. His other passion was Manchester United and after he was diagnosed with cancer, Tony would take his laptop to the hospital so that his Dad could keep up with the exploits of the Red Devils. Lolly did not let his illness stop him and after the first operation he set off for Atlanta in the United States to visit his youngest son there. His proudest moment was probably when he finally received recognition by the FFA five years ago when he was presented with his Australian cap in honour of his appearances for his adopted country in 1958. An ornament to the game during his career, Lolly Vella will be remembered as one of migrants who helped transform football in the post-war era.

I am indebted to Tony Vella, junior, Lolly's son, Ted Smith and Milan Ninovic for assistance with this tribute to Lolly Vella.



Lolly Vella attempted header. Source: Laurie Schwab collection, Deakin University Library.

Lolly Vella (left) and Bill Vojtek at the presentation of their Australian caps. Source: Tony Vella, junior.



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TABLE	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Wellington Phoenix	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
2 Adelaide United	1	1	0	0	2	0	2	3
3 Melbourne Heart	1	1	0	0	2	1	1	3
4 Perth Glory	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	3
5 West Sydney Wanderers	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
6 Central Coast Mariners	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
7 Melbourne Victory	1	0	0	1	1	2	-1	0
8 Brisbane Roar	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	0
9 Sydney FC	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0
10 Newcastle Jets	1	0	0	1	0	2	-2	0

THIS WEEK	ROUND 2	FIXTURE	VENUE	LOCAL	AEDT
	Fri Oct 12	Adelaide United v W Sydney Wanderers	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00pm	7:30pm
	Sat Oct 13	Sydney FC v Newcastle Jets	Allianz Stadium	5:30pm	5:30pm
	Sat Oct 13	Brisbane Roar v Melbourne Victory	Suncorp Stadium	6:45pm	7:45pm
	Sun Oct 14	Melbourne Heart v Wellington Phoenix	AAMI Park	3:00pm	3:00pm
	Sun Oct 14	Central Coast Mariners v Perth Glory	Bluetongue Stadium	5:00pm	5:00pm

NEXT WEEK	ROUND 3	FIXTURE	VENUE	LOCAL	AEDT
	Fri Oct 19	Melbourne Victory v Adelaide United	Etihad Stadium	7:30pm	7:30pm
	Sat Oct 20	Newcastle Jets v Central Coast Mariners	Hunter Stadium	5:30pm	5:30pm
	Sat Oct 20	W Sydney Wanderers v Sydney FC	Parramatta Stadium	7:45pm	7:45pm
	Sun Oct 21	Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar	Westpac Stadium	4:30pm	2:30pm
	Sun Oct 21	Perth Glory v Melbourne Heart	nib Stadium	2:00pm	5:00pm

ROUND 01 RESULTS

Melbourne Victory 1 (Marco Rojas 24')
Melbourne Heart 2 (David Williams 14', Dylan Macallister 45+2')
 Crowd: 42,032 at Etihad Stadium

Wellington Phoenix 2 (Huysegems 43, Louis Fenton 75)
Sydney FC 0
 Crowd: 12,057 at Westpac Stadium

Western Sydney 0
Central Coast 0
 Crowd: 10,458 at Parramatta Stadium

Newcastle Jets 0
Adelaide United 2 (Dario Vidusic 2', Iain Ramsay 75')
 Crowd: 14,868 at Hunter Stadium

Perth Glory 1 (Billy Mehmet 89')
Brisbane Roar 0
 Crowd: 14,085 at Patersons Stadium

TOP GOAL SCORERS

1 - Louis fenton (Phoenix)
 Stein Huysegem (Phoenix)
 Dylan Macallister (Heart)
 Marco Rojas (Victory)
 David Williams (Heart)
 Billy Mehmet (Glory)



An opening goal by David Williams in the Melbourne Derby scores him an early place on the charts.

A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE WEEK ROUND 01

Compiled by Steven Talevski



GK: Mathew Ryan – Last seasons A-League goalkeeper of the season started the season where he left off with another strong showing by keeping a clean sheet against Western Sydney.

RB: Michael Marrone - The Heart full back was at his best during the Melbourne Derby and played a part in his sides winning goal.

CB: Michael Thwaite – A new club but the same old story for the defender with another solid performance against last year's Premiers. Thwaite may well be one of this season's best signings.

CB: Bas van den Brink – The Dutchmen played a crucial part in the Glory's centre of defence to keep last season's Premiers scoreless.

LB: Scott Jamieson – The third Glory defender in the team of the week, Jamieson was solid in defence while also a threat pushing up the field as he found substitute Billy Mehmet from a cross for the winning goal.

CDM: Manny Muscat – The Maltese international may have been nutmegged twice by Alessandro Del Piero but he controlled the Nix midfield as Ricky Herbert moved him from his usual right back position.

CDM: Liam Miller – Miller complemented Jacob Burns well in the centre of midfield for the Glory as he added some creative spark.

RW: Mate Dugandzic – Playing against his old side, Dugandzic's willingness to take on players troubled the Victory all night as he provided Dylan Macallister with a delightful cross for Hearts winner.

CAM: Dario Vidusic – A 33 hour flight didn't seem to slow down Adelaide's number ten as Vidusic scored in the first minute before setting Ramsey up to double Adelaide's lead in the second half.

LW: Louis Fenton – The Wellington Phoenix School of Excellence product paid back Ricki Herbert's faith and terrorised Socceroo Brett Emerton before scoring a powerful diving header.

ST: Dylan Macallister – The A-League journey man made a terrific first impression to the Melbourne Heart fans by scoring the winner against cross town rivals the Victory.

Coach: Ricki Herbert – Despite all the doubters, Wellington got off to a terrific start as Herbert put faith into youngster Louis Fenton and new signings Benjamin Totori and Stein Huysegems. Herbert also moved Leo Bertos to right back and Manny Muscat into the centre of midfield which paid off dividends. However, can Herbert and his Wellington side keep it up all season?

Star Man

Louis Fenton
 Wellington Phoenix



You couldn't have imagined a better debut for the New Zealand youngster. Fenton's willingness to take on players and have shots from outside the penalty area troubled the Sydney FC defence that included Socceroo Brett Emerton. To top it all off, Fenton scored a stunning header right before being substituted.

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Letters: mailbag@goalweekly.com
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Melbourne Victory



1

Melbourne Heart



2

Match Details

Melbourne Victory 1 (Marco Rojas 24')
Melbourne Heart 2 (David Williams 14',
Dylan McAllister 45 + 2')
Venue: Etihad Stadium
Referee: Jarred Gillet
Attendance: 42,032

Melbourne Victory: 20. Lawrence Thomas, 2. Matthew Foschini, 3. Adam Traore, 5. Mark Milligan, 6. Leigh Broxham (18. Daniel Allsopp 64'), 7. Guilherme Finkler, 8. Jonathan Bru, 9. Marcos Flores (17. James Jeggo 67'), 10. Archie Thompson, 11. Marco Rojas (16. Theo Markelis 72'), 23. Adrian Leijer

Unused substitutes: 1. Tando Velaphi.
Yellow cards: Jonathan Bru 43'
Red cards: Nil

Melbourne Heart: 1. Clint Bolton, 2. Michael Marrone, 4. Simon Colosimo, 5. Fred (10. Josip Tadic 82'), 6. Patrick Gerhardt, 8. Matt Thompson (17. Jason Hoffman 75'), 9. Dylan McAllister, 11. Richard Garcia, 15. David Williams, 16. Aziz Behich, 23. Mate Dugandzic (18. David Vrankovic 90 + 5').

Unused substitutes: 20. Andrew Redmayne
Yellow cards: Patrick Gerhardt 10', Richard Garcia 26', Fred 57', Mate Dugandzic 90 + 3.
Red cards: Nil

Heart edge Victory in Derby thriller

By Daniel Quinn

The Melbourne Heart have defeated the Melbourne Victory 2-1 at Etihad Stadium in the opening game of the 2012-13 A-League season in a thrilling Melbourne Derby on Friday night.

The end-to-end encounter had plenty of chances and entertainment for the 42,032 in attendance, the highest crowd for a Melbourne Derby.

David Williams opened the scoring only after 14 minutes firing past Victory 'keeper Lawrence Thomas, who put in a brilliant performance on the night.

But less than ten minutes later the Victory levelled the contest as Marcos Flores and Archie Thompson linked up well to find Marco Rojas. But just before the half-time break Mate Dugandzic superbly found an unmarked Dylan Macallister to edge Heart in front.

Both sides pushed in the second-half with Heart mustering the majority of chances with Williams and Macallister butchering their chances, but Heart held on.

The 2012-13 A-League season got off to a storming start with both Melbourne sides pushing for an early goal and through Williams Melbourne Heart did so.

Fred and former Soccer Richard Garcia linked up well to find Williams all on his own who finished nicely past Thomas.

But shortly after Victory equalised with a beautiful team move which was finished off by Rojas.

2010-11 Johnny Warren Medallist Marcos Flores played a wonderful ball out to a rampaging Archie Thompson whose cross picked out the New Zealander who made no mistake in volleying home.

Victory showed glimpses what Ange Postecoglou had implemented, building up from the back patiently along the ground, whereas Heart were using their width floating many balls into the box looking



Heart-Starter: Dylan Macallister is off to the perfect start with a goal on debut. Photo: ANITA MILAS

for the big Macallister.

On the edge of the break Victory went close to taking the lead as Gui Finkler and Flores linked up well, before the Argentine struck the woodwork with a venomous effort.

But seconds later a Michael Marrone touch sent Mate Dugandzic on his way, before superbly crossing for an unmarked Macallister who easily finished from eight yards out.

Macallister's revival at Heart was evident as the former Gold Coast United striker exquisitely chipped Thomas from outside the box, although his effort drifted wide.

Victory pushed in the second-half in search for the equaliser and substitutes Theo Markelis and Danny Allsopp linked up fantastically, before the latter headed into the hands of Clint Bolton.

Meanwhile Heart were a huge threat on the counter with Williams having two strikes denied by two excellent reflex saves from Thomas.

Melbourne Heart's debutant Coach and former Socceroo John Aloisi was pleased how his side played on a tactical level.

"The most pleasing aspect was that tactically the boys did exactly

what we have been doing in training, it's one thing working on it and it's another executing it during the game."

"Victory dominated the possession but we knew that was going to happen and we just tried to setup our structure and shape to win the ball in certain areas then catch them out."

Melbourne Victory Coach Ange Postecoglou was hugely disappointed and blames the performance on himself.

"I'm not happy about anything! Forty-two thousand turned up and we let them down so I've got nothing

to be happy about, absolutely zero.

"No point in pointing at the players, it's my responsibility. I reckon I've done something wrong in the build up for us to perform like that and that's for me to give myself a whack around the head to make sure we don't do that again."

"Overall I don't think we controlled the game at anytime, we didn't really appose ourselves on the contest. I thought we just didn't get anywhere near the levels we aspired to and needed to."



Boots n' All: Derbies aren't for the faint hearted as players give their all.

Photo: DANIEL FLIS



David Williams is ecstatic after giving heart a shock 1-0 lead.

Photo: DANIEL FLIS

Friday, October 19, 2012
Kick-off 7:30pm
Etihad Stadium

ticketmaster.com.au or call 136 100

West Sydney

0

CC Mariners

0

Match Details

Western Sydney Wanderers 0
Central Coast Mariners 0
Parramatta Stadium
Attendance: 10,458
Referee: Alan Milliner

Western Sydney Wanderers: 1. Ante Covic (Gk), 3. Adam D'Apuzzo, 4. Nikolai Topor-Stanley, 5. Michael Beauchamp (c), 6. Jerome Polenz, 7. Labinot Haliti (21. Shinji Ono 59'), 8. Mateo Poljak (2. Shannon Cole 78'), 9. Dino Kresinger, 10. Aaron Mooy, 17. Youssouf Hersi (14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi 59'), 19. Mark Bridge

Substitutes Not Used: 20. Jerrad Tyson (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Mooy 53'
Red Cards: Nil

Central Coast Mariners: 1. Mathew Ryan (Gk), 3. Joshua Rose, 4. Pedj Bojic, 6. Patrick Zwaanswijk, 7. John Hutchinson (c), 8. Adriano Pellegrino (18. Nick Montgomery 70'), 10. Tomas Rogic, 14. Michael McGlinchey, 16. Trent Sainsbury, 19. Mitchell Duke, 21. Mile Sterjovski (9. Bernie Ibini 70')

Substitutes Not Used: 5. Zach Anderson, 20. Justin Pasfield (Gk)
Yellow Cards: Sterjovski 38'
Red Cards: Nil

Wanderers Baptised In Solid League Debut

By Ben O'Neill

CENTRAL Coast Mariners commenced their Hyundai A-League Premiership defence with a 0-0 draw away to Western Sydney Wanderers at Parramatta Stadium on Saturday night.

In the historic A-League encounter, a crowd of 10,458 fans saw Graham Arnold's men dominate possession against Tony Popovic's team on a slick, rain sodden surface.

However, the well-organised Wanderers managed to frustrate the reigning Premiers Plate winners in their first ever Hyundai A-League clash, earning a point in what was a tight, tense, and ultimately entertaining affair.

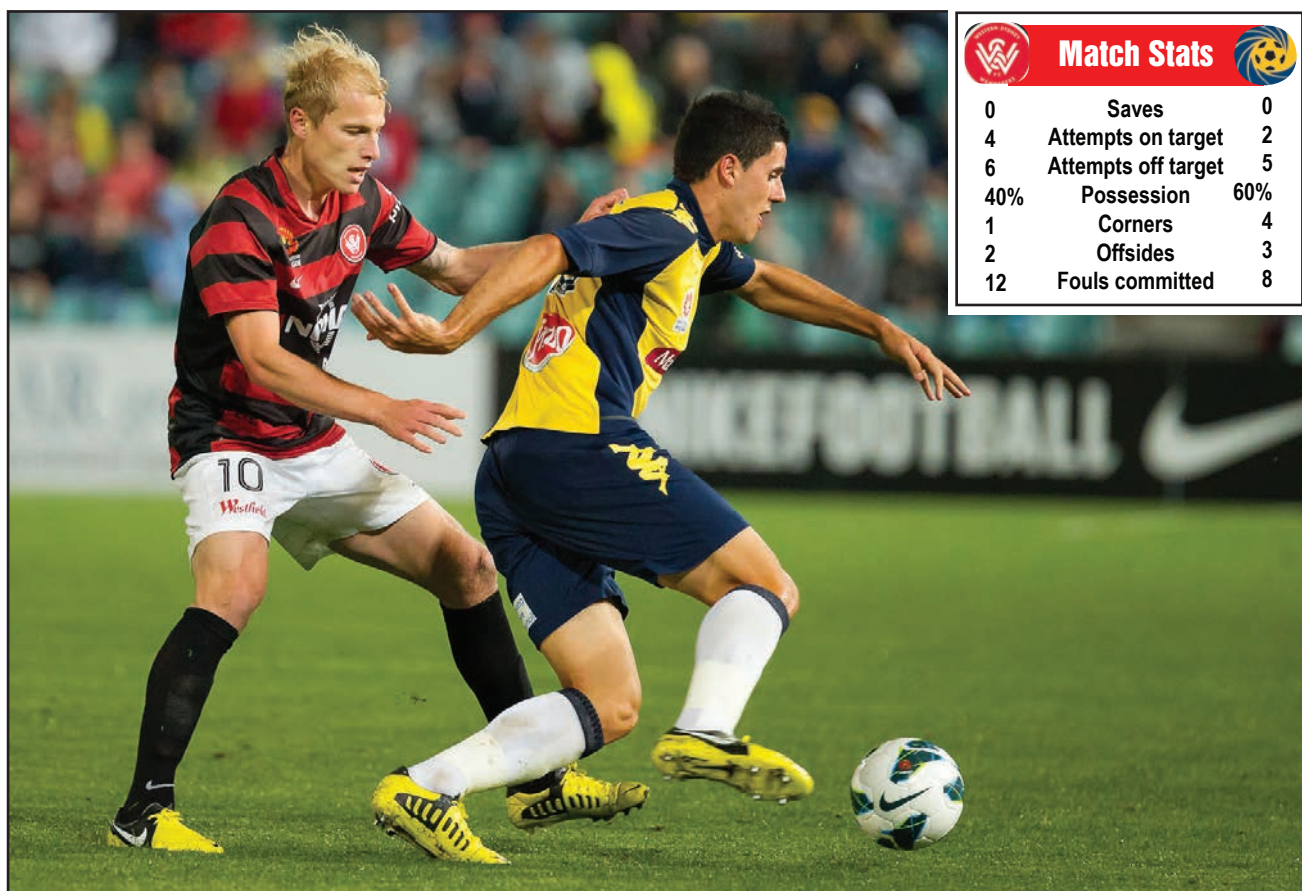
The first half saw relatively few clear-cut opportunities created by either team. Indeed, Mariners midfielder Tomas Rogic was the first to unleash a shot for the away side, however his powerful effort on eight minutes from range was smothered by the Wanderers backline.

Marauding right back Pedj Bojic nearly caught Western Sydney custodian Ante Covic off guard a few minutes later with a cross-cum-shot that almost snuck in at the far post.

The Wanderers best chance of the opening stanza came via the boot of former Newcastle Jets attacker Labinot Haliti in the 37th minute. Bearing down on goal, Haliti found Mariners gloveman Mathew Ryan too tough to beat, with the two-time NAB Young Goalkeeper of the Year doing well to thwart the Wanderers wide man.

Just two minutes later Rogic opened a chance for Mitchell Duke after a strong run through midfield and a crafty pass. Unfortunately for Duke and the Mariners, his touch was too strong and Covic managed to rush off his line to claim comfortably.

Early in the second stanza Mark Bridge had a chance to score an historic goal for the A-League's new boys. Again, Ryan dropped low to stop the shot before bouncing to his



Playmakers Aaron Mooy (Wanderers) and Tomas Rogic (CCM) tussle for midfield supremacy. Photo: GREG SEATON

feet to claim the rebound.

Popovic introduced Japanese superstar Shinji Ono just before the hour mark alongside former Mariners NYL player Kwabena Appiah-Kubi. And, it didn't take long for the former Feyenoord man Ono to show his ability. In the 68th minute he combined well with Aaron Mooy before sending a shot high of Ryan's crossbar.

Graham Arnold introduced Bernie Ibini and handed a debut appearance to British recruit Nick Montgomery with 20 minutes to play, and both made strong contributions

to the match in its dying stages.

Indeed, Montgomery looked menacing and mobile in the Mariners midfield, while Ibini toiled away alongside Duke across the front third, helping fashion numerous half chances for Central Coast to score.

And Michael McGlinchey had a powerful shot on the angle beaten away by Covic with the clock ticking down.

But despite the best efforts of both teams in the final stages, neither side could manage to score the elusive goal to get their season off to

the best possible start.

In the post match press conference, Central Coast Mariners Head Coach Arnold said he was pleased with his teams' performance after a long pre-season. And, the former Qantas Socceroos mentor praised the Wanderers for their effort.

"I'm very happy," Arnold said. "I think the whole evening was a success. Tonight was more about West Sydney and the response was fantastic from the crowd. It was a real good atmosphere."

"It's good to get the first game out of the way. They made it difficult for

us to play. Tony (Popovic) had them very well organised. They made it hard for us to break them down."

"And they had two of the better chances on the counter attack."

"(But) I'm going up the freeway happy with a point."

Central Coast Mariners play their next Hyundai A-League game at home to Perth Glory next Sunday 14 October, 2012. The team will play in all pink in an Hyundai A-League first, supporting Pink Ribbon Day. Tickets for the Mariners first home clash of the season are available from Ticketek.



Japanese World Cup star Shinji Ono pulls the trigger, but to no avail.

Photo: GREG SEATON



Mariners keeper Matthew Ryan thwarts an attempt by Youssouf Hersi.

Photo: GREG SEATON



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Newcastle Jets



0

Adelaide United



2

Match Details

Newcastle Jets 0
Adelaide United 2
At Hunter Stadium
Referee: Shaun Evans
Crowd: 14,868

Newcastle Jets: 2. Scott Neville, 4. Josh Mitchell, 5. Dominik Ritter, 6. Ben Kantarovski, 8. Ruben Zadkovich, 9. Emile Heskey (17. James Virgili 71') 15. Craig Goodwin, 16. Jobe Wheelhouse (19. Michael Bridges 75') 20. Mark Birighitti (Gk), 22. Adam Taggart (1. Ben Kennedy (Gk) 58') 23. Ryan Griffiths
 Unused Substitutes: 11. Connor Chapman
 Yellow Cards: Ritter 80'
 Red Cards: Birighitti 57'

Adelaide United: 1. Eugene GaleKovic (Gk), 2. Osama Malik (19. Jake Barker-Daish 75') 3. Nigel Boogaard, 6. Cassio, 10. Dario Vidosic, 11. Bruce Djite (8. Marcelo Carrusca 76') 12. Antony Golec, 14. Cameron Watson, 16. Daniel Bowles, 17. Iain Ramsay, 21. Jeronimo Neumann (22. Fabio Ferreira 76')
 Unused Substitutes: 30. John Hall (Gk)
 Yellow Cards: Boogaard 52', Bowles 68'
 Red Cards: Nil

By Shaun Dyas

Adelaide United has defeated the Newcastle Jets 2-0 in a controversial A-League match in front of 14,868 fans at Hunter Stadium.

The match will be remembered for an incident on 57 minutes when Newcastle keeper Mark Birighitti was sent off for handballing outside of his penalty area.

Referee Shaun Evans was certain that the ball struck the arm of Birighitti even though replays at the ground suggested the ball hit Birighitti in the side.

When asked for his opinion, Jets coach Gary Van Egmond was careful with his words at the post match press conference.

"I haven't seen it. Some people tell me it wasn't handball, some tell me it was. It is the referee's interpretation," he said.

Adelaide coach John Kosmina preferred to praise the tenacity and fighting spirit of his team after the disappointment of the midweek loss to Bunyodkor in the Asian Champions league.

"It has been a long week. For the guys to get through all the travel has been a fantastic effort," he said. Earlier, Adelaide fired out of the blocks inside the opening few minutes after some clever lead up work from their Argentine import Jeronimo Neumann. He was afforded far too much space on the edge of the Newcastle area and whipped in a delightful cross for Dario Vidosic. The former Socceroo didn't need a second invitation and slid his shot past Jets keeper Mark Birighitti from 6 yards.

After the early setback the home team were able to create a couple of opportunities. The first came on 13 minutes. New signing Josh Mitchell got on the end of a corner from Jets captain Jobe Wheelhouse. He tried to flick the ball past Adelaide custodian Eugene Galekovic from 6 yards and succeeded. The home fans were about to explode but for a clever Cassio clearance off the line. Newcastle continued to control the flow of the match but was continu-



Flying High: Dario Vidosic executes a clinical finish after the match has barely begun. Photo: PETER NEVILLE

	Match Stats	
4	Saves	2
5	Attempts on target	6
8	Attempts off target	5
53%	Possession	47%
8	Corners	4
1	Offsides	2
16	Fouls committed	11

ally denied on numerous occasions by the Reds defence, in particular Cassio and Nigel Boogaard having impressive first halves. The Jets continued to press but struggled to create any meaningful opportunities.

The Jets star signing Emile Heskey was reasonably quiet in the opening period but came to life in an incident on 40 minutes. Ruben Zadkovich crossed from the right edge and Galekovic comfortably claimed only to collide with Heskey. A minor disagreement occurred between both sides with Heskey continuing

to remonstrate with the referee for several minutes.

The major incident of the match took place on 57 minutes. Newcastle goalkeeper Birighitti was harshly sent off for what appeared to not be handball. Replays showed that the ball struck the keeper in the side of his ribs but referee Shaun Evans had already shown the red card and the keeper was forced to watch the rest of the match from the sheds. The home fans were livid at the decision and let their feelings be known as a chorus of boos echoed around the stadium.

Despite the numerical disadvantage, the home side continued to try and get the equaliser and pressed further forward on the offensive. They were almost made to pay on 73 minutes.

The Jets turned the ball over playing out from the back and Vidosic collected and squared the ball for Ramsay. He seemed certain to score but for a desperate tackle from Jets defender Josh Mitchell. The follow up still spilled for Ramsay and he smashed a low shot that replacement keeper Ben Kennedy was able to block away with his feet.

The Jets did not heed the warning and the same pair capitalised two minutes later. This time the square pass from Vidosic was perfection. Ramsay was left with the simple task of knocking the ball over the line from two yards into the unguarded goal.

Newcastle next travel to Sydney next week to take on the Alessandro Del Piero led Sydney FC. Adelaide on the other hand will get to open up their home season by taking on Western Sydney Wanderers at Hindmarsh Stadium.



Jobe Wheelhouse wins the aerial battle on this occasion but was left frustrated for much of the afternoon. Photo: BEN NEVILLE



Former England and Liverpool player Emile Heskey couldn't get a his Jets career off to a winning start. Photo: PETER NEVILLE

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HUNTER SPORTS SUPERSTORE



Perth Glory

1

Brisbane Roar

0

Match Details

Perth Glory 1 (Billy Mehmet 89')

Brisbane Roar 0

Crowd: 14,085 at Patersons Stadium

Perth Glory: 1. D.Vukovic, 2. B.van den Brink, 7. J.Burns, 8.D.Heffernan, 9.S.Smeltz, 10.L.Miller, 13.T.Dodd, 14.S.McGarry, 19.J.Risdon, 21.S.Jamieson, 23.MThwaite.

Yellow cards: Miller 33', Burns 81', Dodd 85'.
Red cards: None

Brisbane Roar: 1.M.Theo, 2.M.Smith, 3.S.Stefanutto, 4.M.Jurman, 6.E.Paartalu, 7.B.Berisha, 11.B.Halloran, 17.M.Nichols, 19.J.Hingert, 22.T.Broich, 24.N.Fitzgerald.
Goals: None
Yellow Cards: Nichols 33', Stefanutto 45', Berisha 45', Dong-Hyun 89'.
Red cards: None

By Juanita Shepherd

The stadium at Patterson erupted with euphoric shouts when Billy Mehmet scored the winning goal in the 89th minute of the highly anticipated game between Perth Glory and Brisbane Roar.

Glory went on to win 1-0 reclaiming their disastrous loss to Roar in the grand final with a cross kick from Scott Jamieson allowing Mehmet to swiftly head the ball into the goal evading Michael Theo's attempts to stop it.

It was an exciting game, with Glory going full throttle as if they had a point to prove, even though Roar fought back with the ferocity of a lion there was no denying Glory had the upper hand.

80 seconds into the game Liam Miller took a corner keeping Theo on his toes, despite Miller's brilliant kick it was a bit wide allowing Theo to get there just in time; it was a good opening for Glory with Roar fighting back.

The first half saw Glory's determination but by no means undermining Roar's abilities, however wasn't Glory backing down. Erik Paartalu's pass fell into the path of Glory's Smeltz; the no. 9 Glory player was on fire even though his attempts at scoring were diffused successfully by Theo.

Brisbane Roar retained possession of the ball in the dwindling minutes of the first half. Shortly before referee Ben Williams blew his whistle signalling half time, Roar's Nick Fitzgerald caused panic for Glory supporters when he burst into the box. The quick reflexes of Danny Vukovic resulted in a spectacular save for Glory and loud cheers rose from the stands.

Perhaps the loudest cheer prior to Mehmet's amazing header was Besart Berisha getting a yellow card; the feisty Albanian known for the controversial penalty at the grand final was shown the yellow card by the referee when he clashed into Dean Heffernan just as Glory were about to take a corner.

Besart Berisha wasn't the only one to receive a yellow card; in the 34th minute Liam Miller's knee put itself into Berisha's back drawing an angry response from Brisbane midfielder Mitch Nichols who confronted Miller. Nichols also received a yellow card and Miller and Nichols had to be separated by their teammates and the ref. Despite being booked by the ref Miller and Berisha



Super Sub! Billy Mehmet's header is out of reach for Roar keeper Michael Theo. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

spent the game shadowing each other. Burns, Dodd and Stefanutto also received yellow cards.

There was a few comical moments during the match, two in particular one for each team; Matthew Smith, the Roar captain garnered some sniggers when he launched the ball straight to the other side of the field, towards his left miles away from any of his team members, the goal, or indeed even a Glory player! And Perth player Van Den Brink suddenly sprinted half way up the field all by himself away from the action, half way through changed his mind and ran back towards his teammates. Both were humorous incidents and nobody's quite

sure what Smith and Van Den Brink had in mind! However Van Den Brink's well timed challenges as he defended the Glory team resulted in Roar struggling to score a goal.

At half time the score board simply read Glory - 0 and Roar - 0. Even though Roar's best chance at a goal came in the 43rd minute when Mitch Nichols found winger Nick Fitzgerald who momentarily hesitated to shoot finding himself alone with Vukovic who took advantage of Fitzgerald's split second hesitation and standing tall and erect gracefully saved the goal.

The second half saw Perth Glory return to the game with the same fiery spirit and

determination in which they started the match. The 14085 strong crowds yelled loudly for the home team and viciously booed and hissed the visitors. Regardless of history of the grand final still fresh in everyone's minds Brisbane Roar played brilliantly.

The second half of the game saw a number of substitute players come on from both sides. Nick Ward replaced Dean Heffernan and Mitch Nichols left the field to be replaced by Massimo Muroccca. Brisbane Roar also put in their young Korean striker Donghyun Do, his speed and vitality was impressive but his attitude earned him a yellow card.

Shane Smeltz left the field to be replaced

by Billy Mehmet; minutes to being on the pitch his goal thanks to the amazing footwork of Scott Jamieson gave Perth Glory their three points for the first game of the season.

The crowd was lost in their fanatical happiness at Billy's goal to fully appreciate the closeness to which Brisbane Roar were in equalizing the game, when a mere few seconds following Billy Mehmet's goal Brisbane attacker Ben Halloran hit the crossbar with Vukovic nowhere near to defend the goal!

It was an unbelievable game with a 1-0 win for Glory; they asserted themselves and had a taste of the victory which they had previously lost to Brisbane Roar.



Perth Glory players hunt in packs as Shane Smeltz and Dean Heffernan make their presence known Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



Scott Jamieson winds up to cross as Besart berisha gives chase. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

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PICS OF ROUND 01

Les Shorrock's Action Packed Picture Page



After been written off by many pundits on the eve of the season, Melbourne Heart made many to eat humble pie., as David William provides the first first spoonful with the opening goal against Melbourne Victory. Photo: DANIEL FLIS



Thirst crusher: A 1-0 win in the Grand Final Replay gives Perth Glory fans some solace from the heartache of last year's defeat to Brisbane Roar. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



Melbourne Heart gets the Deby party started after Dylan Macallister scores to make it 2-1 against Melbourne Victory. PHOTO: ANITA MILAS



It's high-fives for Perth Glory's Jacob Burns and members of the Purple Army. Photo: CRAIG ECCLES



Jets fans hail their heroes and the arrival of Emile Heskey. Photo: BEN NEVILLE



Western Sydney Wanderers captain Michael Beauchamp manages to out jump Mariner Tom Rogic as the heavens open at Parramatta Stadium. Photo: GREG SEATON



Adelaide Utd Line Up

- 1.Eugene Galekovic (gk) (c)
- 2.Osama Malik
- 3.Nigel Boogaard
- 5.Iain Fyfe
- 6.Cassio
- 8.Marcelo Carrusca
- 9.Sergio van Dijk
- 10.Dario Vidosic
- 11.Bruce Djite
- 12.Antony Golec
- 14.Cameron Watson
- 16.Daniel Bowles
- 17.Iain Ramsay
- 18.Fabian Barbiero
- 19.Jake Barker-Daish
- 21.Jeronimo Neumann
- 22.Fabio Ferreira
- 30.John Hall (gk)

three to be omitted
Ins: Iain Fyfe (returns from AFC imposed suspension), Sergio van Dijk (returns from injury), Fabian Barbiero (returns from AFC imposed suspension)

Out: Nil

Unavailable: Zenon Caravella (hip flexor – 3 weeks)

By FFA

Adelaide made a flying start to the new Hyundai A-League season with a 2-0 win over Newcastle despite enduring a disrupted build-up following their mid-week AFC Champions League loss to Bunyodkor in Tashkent. In further good news for the club, they will be boosted by the return of Iain Fyfe and Fabian Barbiero, who both served one-match suspensions for receiving two yellow cards against Bunyodkor. Striker Sergio van Dijk and defender Jon McKain could also return after both missed the season-opening win over Newcastle with minor injuries.

The Wanderers began life in the A-League with a respectable scoreless draw against Central Coast. The fledgling franchise have put together an exciting squad with a good blend of youth and experience. Japanese star recruit Shinji Ono started on the bench and impressed in his second-half cameo against the Mariners and could force his way into the starting line-up against the Reds.

The big issue

Reds – Can Adelaide back up their impressive first win against Newcastle with another win against a team they are expected to beat?

The Reds won just five games last year, but appear to have turned the corner under coach John Kosmina as has been evident by their impressive performance in the ACL and



The Odds

AUFC 1.73
Draw 3.85
WSW 6.00

their victory over the Jets. With the likes of new signings Jeronimo Neumann and Fabio Ferreira adding valuable pace to their line-up, the task for Adelaide now is produce consistent performances week in week out.

Wanderers – The new side already surprised many with their ability to hold out one of the competition's heavyweights, but do they have enough quality to find the back of the net? Aside from a couple of chances to Labinot Haliti, the Wanderers struggled to carve out any good goal-scoring opportunities against the Mariners. Shinji Ono will be better for the run and does have the necessary quality, but the

Fri Oct 12 Hindmarsh Stdm 7:00pm

Reds To Take On New Boys At Home

jury is still out on Haliti and Croatian import Dino Kresinger.

Gamebreaker

Dario Vidosic – The Reds playmaker struggled to find his best form on his return to the A-League last season, but reminded everyone what he is capable of with a stand-out performance against the Jets. He scored one, set up the other and was a constant threat in a dominant display that led to coach Kosmina calling for the 25-year-old to earn a recall to the Socceroos. If he shows the same kind of form against the Wanderers then it could be a long afternoon for the competition new boys.

Prediction:

We might be only one match into the season, but the signs are already looking great for Adelaide. Their new players have impressed and Vidosic looks to be back in the kind of form that saw him become a regular for the Socceroos.

It's still too early to tell how competitive the Wanderers will be, but judging by their first encounter they will be anything but easybeats. However, with their confidence rising high and playing in front of their home fans, expect the Reds to take the points in this clash 2-0.

Kiss of Death
AUFC 2-1 Wanderers



Wanderers Line Up

1. Ante Covic (GK)
2. Shannon Cole
3. Adam D'apuzzo
4. Nikolai Topor-Stanley
5. Michael Beauchamp
6. Jerome Polenz
7. Labinot Haliti
8. Mateo Poljak
9. Dino Kresinger
10. Aaron Mooy
11. Tarek Elrich
12. Tahj Minniecon
13. Joey Gibbs
14. Kwabena Appiah-Kubi
17. Youssouf Hersi
18. Iacopo La Rocca
19. Mark Bridge
20. Jerrad Tyson (GK)
21. Shinji Ono

*** four to be omitted**

Ins: all

Outs: Reece Caira (Young Socceroos)

Unavailable: 15. Reece Caira (Young Socceroos), 23. Jason Trifiro (ankle, one week)



SYDNEY FC

Sydney FC Line Up

1. Ivan Necevski (gk)
2. Sebastian Ryall
3. Fabio Alves
7. Brett Emerton
8. Adam Griffiths
10. Alessandro Del Piero
11. Dimi Petratos
14. Mitch Mallia
15. Terry McFlynn (c)
16. Joel Chianese
18. Trent McClenahan
19. Kruno Lovrek
20. Vedran Janjetovic (gk)
22. Ali Abbas
23. Rhyan Grant
24. Hagi Gligor

one to be omitted
Ins: 11. Dimi Petratos, 23. Rhyan Grant, 24. Hagi Gligor (all promoted)

Out : 21. Yairo Yau (international duty – 1 week), 17. Terry Antonis (concussion – 1 week)

Unavailable: 4. Pascal Bosschaart (achilles tendon, 3 weeks), 5. Nathan Sherlock (groin, 1 week), (not selected), 12. Blake Powell (not selected), 25. Daniel Petkovski (not selected)

By Con Stamocostas

Normally these preview things take on a dour vibe. Some critique about last week's performances, suggestions and ideas on what can be improved but I'd rather use this space as a bitch session about Sydney FC's first game.

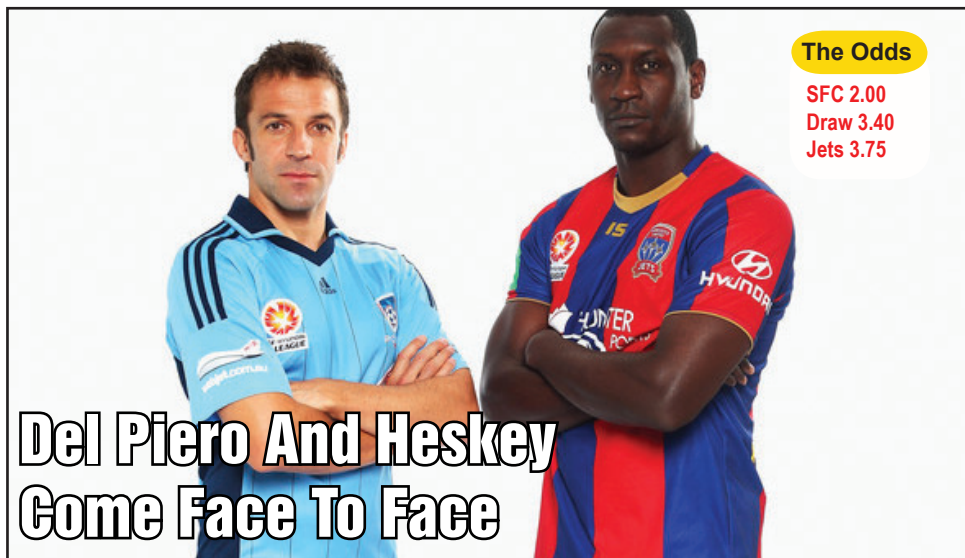
Sydney FC the so called biggest club in the country travelled to Wellington with the least match preparation in world football. Sydney FC's cause wasn't helped by not playing a competitive pre-season game for three weeks prior to the start of the season. It was all thanks to the one-upmanship of Brisbane Roar and Central Coast Mariners who cancelled friendlies for the most absurd reasons. If I was those clubs I'd be well pleased that their antics let to such a bad performance by the Sky Blues.

Let's stick to the Sydney FC is the biggest club in the country theme. If Sydney FC is the biggest club in the country shouldn't their roster reflect this? Do they have the best local defender in the country, What about the best midfielder and the best attacker?

Oh Dear

"Oh Dearism" is a term coined by documentary film maker Adam Curtis. It refers to the shame we feel after watching all the terrible images the news shows on our TV screens. These images leave us feeling helpless and depressed and to which the only response is: "Oh dear." After watching Sydney FC against Wellington Oh dear is the only sane response.

NO pre-season games for three



Del Piero And Heskey Come Face To Face

weeks Oh Dear!

The coaching staff decided not to pursue a late practice game, Oh dear! Fabio: Has a left back wanted to play number 10 as much as Fabio? Oh Dear!

Lovrek: Please change those colourful boots it makes your misdirected passes stand out more and talk about him being the new Krešimir Maruši ? Oh Dear!

Emerton doesn't know how to play RB? He only played there for a local Dutch side called Feyenoord and helped the team make a final of a small competition called the Uefa Cup. Oh Dear!

What makes this worse is that Sydney FC's cross town rivals the West

Sydney Wanderers had just a matter of days to form a team. Compared to Lane FC the Westies looked organised and played with passion to get a respectable result against the Fisherman. It also helps if the other players know each other's names. Oh Dear!

The Jets

What about the Jets? They didn't do much better either losing 2-0 at home to the Pissants.. Emile Heskey was his usual self unfortunately. Both teams should come out fighting as the saying goes. Let's hope both teams have figured out that the start of the A League season is upon us.

"Right Here Right Now" by Fat Boy Slim should be ringing in the play-

ers ears before the game. Phrases like "Work in Progress" and "It will take time to gel" should be cast aside and some of the players and coaches should act talk and play like they mean it!

It will be interesting to see what Alessandro Del Piero will do on the weekend now that he has some minutes under his belt. NO! It will not be interesting it will be AWESOME!

"There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn." Albert Camus Shoot Farken! The Terrace has spoken!

Kiss of Death
Sydney FC 2-2 Jets

The Odds

SFC 2.00
Draw 3.40
Jets 3.75



Jets Line Up

1. Ben Kennedy (Gk)
2. Scott Neville
3. Tiago Calvano
4. Josh Mitchell
5. Dominik Ritter
6. Ben Kantarovski
8. Ruben Zadkovich
9. Emile Heskey
10. Bernardo Ribeiro
14. Taylor Regan
15. Craig Goodwin
16. Jobe Wheelhouse (C)
17. James Virgili
18. Jacob Pepper
19. Michael Bridges
21. Marko Jesic
23. Ryan Griffiths
30. Jack Duncan (Gk)

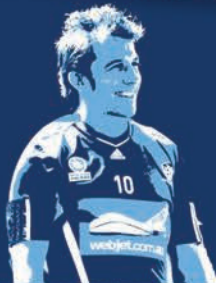
Three To Be Omitted

Ins: Taylor Regan, Jacob Pepper, Jack Duncan (All Promoted)

Out: Mark Birighitti (Red Card Suspension), 11. Connor Chapman (U20'S), 22. Adam Taggart (U20'S)

Unavailable: James Brown (Ankle)

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Roar Line Up

1. Michael Theo (GK)
2. Matt Smith (capt.)
3. Shane Stefanutto
4. Matt Jurman
5. Ivan Franjic
6. Erik Paartalu
7. Besart Berisha
8. Massimo Murdocca
11. Ben Halloran
13. Yuji Takahashi
16. Do Dong-Hyun
17. Mitch Nichols
18. Luke Brattan
19. Jack Hingert
20. Matt Acton (GK)
22. Thomas Broich
24. Nick Fitzgerald.

two to be omitted

Ins: Ivan Franjic, Luke Brattan

Outs: Nil

Unavailable: James Meyer (groin – one week)

Brisbane Roar v Melbourne Victory

Sat Oct 13 Suncorp Stadium 7:45pm

By Jarrod Ellis

The big games just keep coming from Brisbane Roar this season. Only a week after renewing hostilities with their vanquished Grand Final opponents Perth Glory, Brisbane now welcome Ange Postecoglou back to the River City as he returns at the helm of his new look Melbourne Victory outfit.

Much has been made of the departure of Postecoglou from the Roar after last season, with many pundits speculating that it could be the catalyst that brings about a fall from grace for the Brisbane club.

Sunday's 1-0 loss to Perth Glory was a disappointing result for the Roar but there was little indication that there was any significant changes put into place by new coach Rado Vidosic as Brisbane once again dominated possession with a short passing game.

If anything Billy Mehmet's late goal has only served to heighten the importance of the clash as both Melbourne and Brisbane enter the match looking for their first three points of the season.

The Victory looked a much changed outfit from last season in their defeat to Melbourne Heart on Friday, constantly seeking to retain possession and play out from the back, attributes imbued in the current Brisbane team by Postecoglou.

Such tactics can often lead to mistakes that result in goals, as Bris-

King Ange Returns To Brisbane



The Odds
Roar 1.80
Draw 3.65
Victory 5.00

bane fans can attest after having to watch their side concede several calamitous goals as the Roar adapted to Postecoglou's style.

However the end results speak for themselves and having snared back-to-back A-League titles with Brisbane, Postecoglou's Victory should not be underestimated.

If the Roar is to claim the spoils they'll need to overcome a poor historic record after Perth away games, having never won the week after visiting Perth since the inception of the A-League in 2005.

Melbourne will have their own adversity to overcome if they're to record their first win in Brisbane

since 2009, with the trio of Archie Thompson, Mark Milligan and Marco Rojas all set to be absent due to international call-ups. The visitors will however have the benefit of an extra two days preparation, something that hasn't gone unnoticed in the Roar camp.

Victory will need to ensure that they tidy up their play at the back if they hope to avoid any silly goals with Brisbane known for their pressing defence and Postecoglou for his rigid insistence on sticking to the system.

The clash of two sides playing similar football should be intriguing and reflects a Master v Apprentice

aspect with Postecoglou facing Vidosic and a Brisbane side already well-schooled in their art taking on a Melbourne team in only the early stages of learning theirs.

At any rate with both sides employing attacking, high pressing game styles there's sure to be plenty of entertainment had by all at Suncorp Stadium on Saturday night. Brisbane fans and players alike will be sure to want to put one over their former manager, a man who helped pull their club from mediocrity to hosting one of the greatest club sides this country has ever seen.

**Kiss of Death
Roar 2-1 Victory**



Victory Line Up

1. Tando Velaphi (Gk)
2. Matthew Foschini
3. Adama Traore
4. Petar Franjic
6. Leigh Broxham
7. Gui Finkler
8. Jonathan Bru
9. Marcos Flores
13. Diogo Ferreira
14. Billy Celeski
15. Sam Gallagher
16. Theo Markelis
17. Jimmy Jeggo
18. Daniel Allsopp
20. Lawrence Thomas (Gk)
21. Spase Dilevski
23. Adrian Leijer (C)

Ins: Sam Gallagher (Central Coast Mariners), Spase Dilevski (Adelaide United), Petar Franjic, Billy Celeski, Diogo Ferriera (All Promoted)

Out: Archie Thompson, Mark Milligan, Marco Rojas (All On National Team Duty)



Heart Line Up

1. Clint Bolton (GK)
2. Michael Marrone
4. Simon Colosimo
5. Fred (c)
6. Patrick Gerhardt
8. Matthew Thompson
9. Dylan Macallister
10. Josip Tadic
11. Richard Garcia
15. David Williams
16. Aziz Behich
17. Jason Hoffman
18. David Vrankovic
20. Andrew Redmayne (GK)
21. Steven Gray
22. Nick Kalmar
23. Mate Dugandzic,

Ins: Nil

Outs: 14. Golgol Mebrahtu (groin – one week), Jonatan Germano (Fitness – one week), 19. Ben Garuccio (international duty – Qantas Young Socceroos).

Melbourne Heart v Wellington Phoenix

Sun Oct 14 AAMI Park 3:00pm

By Andrew Bishara

Melbourne Heart boss John Aloisi started his managerial life with a bang last week, as he masterminded a victory over their blue and white rivals.

The Heart completely nullified the Victory with Aloisi instructing his team to press high up the pitch, dominate possession and recorded a deserved 2-1 win. It was the first time in their short history that Heart has won their opening game of the season. By the end of the weekend, they could make it two on the bounce.

Just like the Heart, Wellington Phoenix came into their game against Sydney, as the underdogs, but prevailed in a dominated display. With marquee superstar signing Alessandro Del Piero, crossing the Tasman, many thought The Sky Blues would secure a win. Yet the Phoenix has grown as a team under Ricki Herbert, making their home ground a fortress. Dictating play, Phoenix recorded a very comfortable 2-0 win. But the pressure is already on them, as the Phoenix will be facing the Heart with seven unavailable players – and no coach!

With the World Cup Qualifiers looming over Round Two, Ricki Herbert, who is also coach of the New Zealand National team has selected six players from the Phoenix, including striker Jeremy Brockie, midfielder Leo Bertos,

Dream Scenario for Heart in Phoenix Visit



The Odds
Heart 1.68
Draw 3.80
Phoenix 6.00

defenders Ben Sigmund and Tony Lochhead, as well as goalkeepers Mark Paston and Glen Moss, as well as Benjamin Totori who will be in action for the Solomon Islands.

Herbert will hand the managerial reigns to assistant coach Chris Greenacre for the match.

This is one of the talking points of the round, as the Heart have been handed a dream scenario. Aloisi has a full squad ahead of him, with only defender Patrick Gerhardt ruled out with an injury. Captain Fred has been cleared of injury and will feature in the match commencing at 5pm this Sunday at

AAMI Park. Expect Aloisi to stick to Heart's default 4-3-3 formation; forcing his men to play the possession game and press up the pitch.

As for Phoenix, Herbert will probably encourage his team to stick to the formula that worked so well against Sydney, a 4-4-2 formation. The question surrounding them is: who to play? Regular starters Vince Lia, Lucas Pantelis, Jimmy Downey, Dani Sanchez and Mirjan Pavlovic are all reported to be injured and might not play. This has forced four debutants to make the starting eleven; goalkeeper Scott Basalaj and defenders Luke Rowe, Michael Boxall and Cameron Lind-

say.

It will be fascinating clash, between two teams looking to continue from their impressive victories in Round One. The Phoenix will have to do it tough, with the travel schedule and the loss of key players. But the Nixs are a solid unit and will fight it out. This is the game for Heart to finally show come credibility and win when they are supposed too. A tight contest awaits, but expect the Heart, especially backed by a vocal crowd, to make it two from two.

**Kiss of Death
Heart 2-1 Phoenix**

Phoenix Line Up

2. Manny Muscat
5. Michael Boxall
6. Alex Smith
8. Paul Ifill
10. Stein Huysegems
12. Tyler Boyd
15. Cameron Lindsay
16. Louis Fenton
17. Vince Lia
22. Andrew Durante (C)
28. Ricardo Clarke
29. Luke Rowe
30. Scott Basalaj (GK)
31. Tom Biss
39. Jacob Spoonley (GK)

Ins: Michael Boxall (promoted), Cameron Lindsay (promoted), Luke Rowe (promoted from Phoenix FSE), Scott Basalaj (promoted from Phoenix FSE), Tom Biss (promoted from Phoenix FSE), Jacob Spoonley (replacement player -- Auckland City).

Out: Mark Paston (international duty), Glen Moss (international duty), Leo Bertos (international duty), Ben Sigmund (international duty), Tony Lochhead (international duty), Jeremy Brockie (international duty), Benjamin Totori (international duty).

Unavailable: Lucas Pantelis (knee injury - indefinite), Mirjan Pavlovic (medical condition – indefinite), Jimmy Downey (back injury – one week), Dani Sanchez (knee injury – 6 weeks).



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Mariners Line Up

1. Mathew Ryan (gk)
2. Daniel McBreen
3. Joshua Rose
4. Pedj Bojic
5. Zac Anderson
6. Patrick Zwaanswijk
7. John Hutchinson (c)
8. Adriano Pellegrino
9. Bernie Ibini
10. Tomas Rogic
11. Oliver Bozanic
12. Troy Hearfield
13. Brent Griffiths
14. Michael McGlinchey
15. Brad McDonald
16. Trent Sainsbury
18. Nick Montgomery
19. Mitchell Duke
20. Justin Pasfield (gk)
21. Mile Sterjovski

Five to be omitted

Unavailable: 17. Anthony Caceres (Elbow – 2 weeks), 22. James Oates (Ankle – 2 months), Adam Kwasnik (Illness – 1 week)

Central Coast Mariners v Perth Glory

Sun Oct 14 Bluetongue Stdm 5:00pm

By Adrian Deans

Tom Rogic has superb skill, but it's time he started to make an impact on the outcome of matches.

He played one brilliant pass to Mitchell Duke towards the end of the first half, who, if his control hadn't let him down, would have had the simplest of chances. Apart from that, Rogic sparkled brilliantly in the middle without achieving a cutting edge in the final third. If he's to develop into the world class player we all expect him to become, it's time to hone that cutting edge and turn his brilliance into goals.

Mitchell Duke, promoted from the youth team, looked like he was channelling Matt Simon, and even wore his old number 19. His first touch was lacking at a couple of crucial moments but his strength and movement off the ball were excellent. With the right service 'One Speed' Duke can have an impact this season.

Overall, and despite the need for Mat Ryan to make a couple of point blank saves, the Mariners were mostly comfortable against the Wanderers but didn't really get into their usual stride down the flanks. The conditions were pretty bad and the Wanderers were flying on the adrenaline of their epoch-opening game – both teams tried to play football and both will feel they might have had all three points.



The Odds

Mariners 2.20
Draw 3.40
Glory 3.60

Will the Real Tom Rogic Please Stand Up

In contrast, Perth Glory were fabulous against the champions, Brisbane Roar. That was a game played in excellent conditions and the two grand finalists from Season 7 turned on a high standard contest that would have had most other teams looking nervously at the draw to check when they had to play either. They will certainly test the Mariners.

Perth's main strength is in the engine room, led superbly by Jacob Burns and Liam Miller. Burns in particular is maturing into a really valuable player. He does the simple things very well and strikes me as the sort of player that others love to play

with – he wins the ball, plays simple passes at the right time and makes the players around him look good. I would even go so far as to suggest that Holger Osieck ought to be having another look at him. Burns and Miller will be more than a handful for Pellegrino and Hutchinson.

If they get on top, then the main danger for the Mariners will be Shane Smeltz. He looked off the pace a little against the Roar but is the type of player that won't have two anonymous games in a row. The Mariners just held out against the Wanderers (in admittedly tough conditions) but I fear they are in for a much tougher

test at home to the Glory.

Only one round so far but Glory look the goods. They're definitely a top four team, and maybe top two. As for the Mariners – they have the personnel and the systems, but look like they haven't quite put it together yet. Prove me wrong Tom Rogic...prove me wrong.

Adrian Deans is the author of Mr Cleansheets – published by Vulgar Press, distributed by Dennis Jones and Associates and available in all good book stores.

**Kiss of Death
Mariners 2-0 Glory**



Glory Line Up

1. Danny Vukovic (gk)
3. Bas van den Brink
4. Billy Mehmet
5. Steve Pantelidis
6. Nick Ward
7. Jacob Burns (c)
8. Dean Heffernan
9. Shane Smeltz
10. Liam Miller
11. Adrian Zahra
12. Ryo Nagai
13. Travis Dodd
14. Steven McGarry
15. Brandon O'Neill
18. Jesse Makarounas
19. Josh Risdon
20. Neil Young
21. Scott Jamieson
22. Ndumba Makeche
23. Michael Thwaite

Unavailable: 16. Evan Berger (hamstring – 8 weeks), 17. Chris Harold

Ange's Victory visibly a work-in-progress

A-League Rewind



By Robert Di Fabio

The opening week of the A-League season certainly delivered an enticing entrée – crowds advanced through the turnstiles in record numbers, television rating peaked to an all-time high and finally, there were many reasons for fans to feel a sense of optimism and excitement leading into version eight of Australia's revamped domestic competition.

While there were many issues to analyse and dissect, the one topic which caught my eye with overwhelming interest was Victory's innovative game-structure, which didn't exactly go to plan.

Ange Postecoglou, a back-to-back championship winning coach, got off to the worst possible start in his coaching tenure at new home Melbourne Victory – losing to cross-town rival Mel-

bourne Heart by the solitary goal last weekend.

It certainly wasn't the introduction Postecoglou had hoped for, especially with an impressive crowd of 42,000 present at Etihad Stadium. Following the match, the 47-year-old confessed to the media that there were no excuses for his side's lacklustre showing. Evidently frustrated, he reiterated that the season wasn't one for the club to re-build its playing stocks. "I was really disappointed we weren't able to perform to the level we wanted," Postecoglou told Fox Sports.

"We should have been there tonight. There's no excuse for it. There's nothing we've done that shouldn't have prepared us for it. "This is not a building process. Work has started and we need to be ready."

As a spectator, it was evident how Postecoglou wanted his troops to play – a sophisticated football ethos which relies heavily on the team to play the ball out from the back, in conjunction with a high level of ball retention, and above all patience in unlocking the opposition's defensive barricade. This game-style definitely requires a great level of chemistry on the pitch, and importantly time to prosper.



Back to the drawing board? Although the result wasn't what he hoped for, at least the performance indicated that Victory will improve from last season.

Time and time again, Victory attempted to play the ball out from the back, and in some instances could count their lucky stars for not conceding sloppy goals from defensive lapses. Heart's game-plan negated Victory's brilliantly, pressing high up the park, not allowing rookie goalkeeper Lawrence Thomas or his teammates any time to settle on the ball to play out from the backline.

In this case, full credit must be given to boss John Aloisi – in charge of the red and whites for his first game as a professional senior coach. The players knew exactly how to unsettle their opponents, not allowing them to relax into any form of rhythm nor confidence from the opening whistle.

Victory's new philosophy is undoubtedly a work-in-progress. Once the players feel comfortable and accustomed to the system, belief will be conveyed on the pitch, and visibly in their performances. For this to happen, the Victory faithful may need to be patient. It could take half a season for the hard work to really pay dividends.

La Masia is FC Barcelona's youth academy, renowned for producing some of the most talented footballers in the world, including the likes of Leo Messi, Andrés Iniesta and Xavi. Here, the players are taught from a very young age the principles that shape the club,

on and off the pitch – from playing style, to discipline, respect and gamesmanship. In Victory's case, this new playing style is not only a new system, but an image the club is adopting.

While Victory doesn't possess a youth academy as yet, there is now a clear vision as to how the club aspires to play its football, from the youngsters, right through to senior level. And while success may not be immediate, supporters can take some solace knowing that the club is in good hands under Postecoglou's leadership.

Despite going down to the club's inner-city rival – a bitter pill to swallow for the blue half of Melbourne – the panic button hasn't been struck. The result wasn't what many had expected, but the glimpses of what Ange is trying to implement is giving a renewed sense of buoyancy towards the brigade of Victory supporters.

The test against reigning champions Brisbane Roar will be an intriguing affair this weekend, for more than the simple fact it's Postecoglou's first arrival back to his former home. Victory will get to see first-hand how its new game-structure holds up, against an outfit widely renowned for being the benchmark in the competition.

Follow Robert on Twitter @ RobertDiFabio

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PHOTO: GREG SEATON



Back row: Yairo Yau, Ali Abbas, Dimi Petratos, Rhyan Grant, Blake Powell, Reid, Joel Chianese, Mitch Mallia, Hagi Gligor

Middle row: Trent McClenahan, Nathan Sherlock, Daniel Petkovski, Vedran Janjetovic, Ivan Necevski, Adam Griffiths, Terry Antonis, Sebastian Ryall

Front row: Ivan Kalac (Keeper coach), Kruno Lovrek, Pascal Bosschaart, Terry McFlynn (c), Ian Crook (coach), Alessandro Del Piero, Brett Emerton, Fabio, Steve Corica (Asst coach)

Boo's World

SUMMER SERIES



By Mark Boric

The A-League was back in big style, with a record week for crowds and ratings. It started with a massive Melbourne Derby, in which Heart once again put Victory in their place.

In Wellington ADP showed his class, but unfortunately his teammates are more ADHD and operate on a different level. The Wanderers are still wondering when they will get their first goal, it may be a while if they are going to rely on Labinot Haliti to score it. Central Coast were a bit of a let down in that game,

Emile Heskey, having his first start for the Patinack Farm stable, didn't get off to a flyer in Newcastle. Adelaide defied the odds to overcome the big trek back from Tashkent (minus two suspended players) to notch the win. The Glory fans took a leaf out of Clive Palmer's book, hiring a plane to carry a message mocking the diving Besart Berisha. It may



You'll Never Walk Alone?
Tony Sage stands tall after Perth Glory trumped Brisbane Roar in the Grand Final Reply.
Photo: CRAIG ECCLES

have only been a first round game, but the final whistle saw club owner Tony Sage celebrate like they had won the Iron Ore Cup again, charging onto the pitch in replica kit and high-fiving anyone in his path. Sadly, Berisha did not confront him and ask him to meet him in the tunnel.

The 2012 VPL Grand Final comes down to a battle between Oakleigh Cannons and Dandenong Thunder on Sunday. It will be a first ever State Title for the winner, with Oakleigh beaten finalists last season and Thunder going down on penalties to Altona Magic in 2009.

The first ever FIFA GOAL grant for facilities issued to Australia has seen the FFV receive \$500,000

which it will use to upgrade the floodlights at Darebin. They wouldn't want to improve them too much, it will only make the poor state of the playing surface more visible.

Usain Bolt played in a friendly game against Melbourne Heart Youth last week, as he is too young to be considered for a marquee spot in the A-League. Maybe after Rio. The Olympics that is, not Ferdinand.

Great to see Hayden Foxe try and steal the limelight at the Melbourne Derby with his colorful outfit. Is it true some thought Ronald McDonald had been signed in the off-season and was warming up on the sideline looking to come on as a substitute?

Speaking of farce, Heart's opponents this week, Wellington Phoenix, are losing so many players to international duty they may be contacting Melbourne Storm to see if they have any Kiwis floating around they could use to make up the numbers. If any of the NZers from Green Gully are heading to the A-League/VPL Grand Final double header, the should probably arrive early and bring their boots just in case.

The A-League half-time interviews with players walking off the pitch will only be interesting the day a player snaps and drops a few f and c bombs in frustration at the scoreline. Or smacks Andy Maher. Now that would be good

Hyundai A-League breaks attendance, TV and digital records

The Hyundai A-League has set new single-round records for attendance, TV ratings and digital audiences in the opening week 2012/13 Season.

In Round 1, 93,500 fans turned out to the five matches, beating the previous single-round aggregate record set in Round 3 last season of 87,508.

TV audiences have also surged with an average audience of 108,000 per game making it the highest-rating single round TV audience all-time. This marks an increase of over 35% on audiences from last season and up 38% on the corresponding round from the 2011/12 season.

Visits to the FFA digital network of club and Hyundai A-League websites was up 25% on last season's first round record, seeing 107,000 unique browsers on Hyundai A-League content over the period Friday night to Sunday afternoon.

The impressive audience growth is expected to continue in international markets. This season the Hyundai A-League will be seen in territories across the globe with live matches taken throughout Asia including Hong Kong, Singapore, Myanmar, in Italy via Mediaset and the USA with both One World Sport and Fox Soccer Channel while weekly highlights will be broadcast in the UK through Sky Sports.

The all matches are also broadcast on global broadband by Perform. Ratings figures are not available at this time.

The weekend's audience figures show that the 2012/13 Hyundai A-League is living up to its billing as the most anticipated season in the A-League's history, said FFA CEO Ben Buckley.

"The huge audience growth in attendances, TV and digital is an early dividend for the hard-work by our 10 clubs and the A-League management," said Buckley.

"The excitement generated by new marquee players and new coaches has been converted into fans on the terraces and viewers on screens. What they saw was high-quality football, superb sports entertainment and a fabulous football atmosphere.

"The fans have been exceptional, the feeling at the games has been electric and I look forward with eager anticipation to Round 2 and more crowd records to be broken when Sydney FC take on Newcastle Jets at Allianz Stadium."

With an average attendance across the five matches of 18,700 the five matches now hold the highest average attendance since the competition grew to 10 Clubs.

HIGHEST A-LEAGUE ROUND AGGREGATES:		
93,500	Round 1, 2012/13 season (5 matches)	
87,508	Round 3, 2011/12 season (5 matches)	
84,685	Round 20, 2007/08 season (4 matches)	
80,212	Round 16, 2006/07 season (4 matches)	
79,850	Round 1, 2011/12 season (5 matches)	
73,751	Round 24, 2010/11 season (5 matches)	



FIFA GOAL funding for FFV Centre

Football Federation Australia (FFA) has announced that Football Federation Victoria (FFV) has been granted \$500,000 in funding from the FIFA GOAL program to install floodlights at the FFV State Football Centre at the Darebin International Sports Centre.

The inaugural grant made to Australia under the FIFA GOAL program, which provides funds for Member Associations across the world to help improve national training facilities, was made possible following an FFA decision to open funding applications to State and Territory Member Federations.

FFV's application was deemed to be the preferred project to submit to FIFA following an extensive process of evaluation.

"I congratulate FFV for becoming the first recipient of FIFA GOAL funding in Australia," said FFA CEO Ben Buckley.

"FFV has a highly developed facilities strategy, which has received good support from the Victorian Government. This relationship with government strengthened FFV's application. The Darebin site was also

selected for it alignment with the facility strategy for the 2015 AFC Asian Cup.

"The credit goes to chairman Nick Monteloene and CEO Mark Rendell for implementing such progressive policies for the Victorian football community."

"With the game growing at such a rate in Victoria, the improvement of facilities is one of the core pillars of FFV'S Strategic Plan through until 2015. This grant will create a facility at Darebin that provides more opportunities and better playing experiences for our growing player base," said FFV CEO Mark Rendell.

"FFV would like to thank FFA and FIFA for their foresight in providing this funding to Victoria where it will be put to good use."

The floodlights will enable Australia's national teams (men, women, boys and girls) and FFV National Training Centre teams to practice in optimal conditions for extended periods of time. Installation work will commence immediately.

Australia will be able to access additional FIFA GOAL funding for other states next year.

A Club In A Nutshell



By Simon Pearson

FC Schalke 04 is a German club playing in the Bundesliga. Formed in 1904 in Gelsenkirchen by a group of high school students.

Originally called Westfalia Schalke and played in red and yellow uniform but after several attempts at merging with a gymnastics club to gain recognition in the German football league they eventually took the name FC Schalke 04 and changed their strip colours to blue and white. By the time they had their first decent stadium built "Glückauf-Kampfbahn" they were on their way to becoming a top team, winning their first championship in 1929.

Mostly the players were local coalminers supported mainly by the coalmining community; by 1931, they registered an incredible 70,000+ crowd. By 1933 under Nazi Germany there were 16 top flight divisions-Schalke were to dominate theirs never losing a home game and also making it to 14 out of 18 national finals, winning a hatful of titles and incredibly went 6 seasons



Hero of the Modern Era: In his vintage years Raul has still managed to show his class and perform at the highest level.

unbeaten up to and including the world war 2 years. After the war, Schalke lost form and to the current date they have never recaptured anywhere near the winning mentality of the 1930's to 40's. It took them a good while to register another title championship in 1958 and this was the last time they won the title to date.

During the 1970's Schalke managed to win their second German cup, they also moved to a new stadium- the "Parkstadion" which was built for the 1974 World cup and the hosts "West Germany" skippered by the mercurial "Franz Beckenbauer" won it, beating the total football system of the Dutch led by

the wizard "Johan Cruyff".

The 1970's also marked a black period for FC Schalke 04. They were found guilty of match fixing and three of their players were banned for life for taking part in "The Bundesliga Scandal of 1971". Schalke did manage to redeem themselves somewhat- finishing as runners up to Borussia Mönchengladbach in the 1977 championship, however they found themselves being relegated to the second tier on two occasions in the early 80's. They have however remained back in the top flight since 1992.

In 1997 Schalke won another ma-

jor piece of silverware since their German cup win in 1972, this time beating the Italian giants Internazionale Milan in the UEFA cup final on penalties. Since that famous win, they have managed eight top five finishes in the league and had several strong runs in the Champions league.

The current squad is decent- comprising the legendary striker Raul who won an incredible amount of titles with Real Madrid -arguably the biggest club in the world. Raul smashed all kinds of goal scoring records and holds the current record for the best Spanish player of the season winning it five times.

Along side Raul is another top striker in Klaas-Jan Huntelaar the Holland international goal machine.

One of the banned players of the 1971 scandal Klaus Fischer still holds the all time top goal scoring record with 182 goals in 477 appearances (also a record at the club).

These days Schalke play at the "Veltins-Arena" -previously known as "Arena AufSchalke" (the latter replaced the famous Parkstadion). The capacity of their home is 62,000 and is considered to be one of the most modern and best multi use facilities in Europe. FC Schalke 04 have a bit to do yet to get back to their glory days, but if "The Miners" (club nickname) dig deep, then there is no reason they can't come up with the goods once again.

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Roger Sleeman

The Marquee Experiment
It's only early days but after the first round of the A-League, Del Piero, Heskey and Ono made little impact on the playing field.

The so called experts believed Del Piero's touches and creativity singled him as one of Sydney's best players against the Phoenix and Ian Crook said that for a 37 year old, he was a great example to his team-mates. The question is whether the Italian has the mobility and speed to make a difference in the A-League because Muscat in particular closed him down and dispossessed him easily on a number of occasions.

To be fair to Heskey he received little support and was isolated a number of times when he was looking to lay the ball off. Ono came on late and didn't waste the ball but he really is work in progress after being in Sydney for such a short time.

Phoenix Shine
It was interesting to see Les Murray and George Negus predicting in the Sydney Morning Herald last week that the Phoenix would receive the wooden spoon in the A-League. If they had been aware of the club's extensive preseason preparation, their predictions may be different and it was certainly no surprise to see the Phoenix outplay Sydney FC. One of their strengths was the wide play of Totaro, Fenton, Bertos and Lockhead as they continually stretched the the Sydney FC defence. Why the lightning speed of Chianese and Malia wasn't utilised by Sydney FC in the match is a mystery as both of these players barely touched the ball in the ninety minutes. It's a tragedy and totally unjust that this week's match against the Heart has not been postponed because the loss of coach Ricki Herbert and seven Phoenix players for the World Cup qualifiers against Tahiti, will be a huge disadvantage for the Wellington outfit.

A Breath Of Fresh Air
What a pleasure to listen to Frank Farina on Fox Sports Shootout last Sunday night as he presented so well with his no nonsense approach and totally objective view of the game. Other TV panelists could well learn from him and let's hope it's the first of many appearances for

the Socceroo legend. Gary Phillips also was a great foil for Mike Cockerill during the Jets v Adelaide clash as he makes expert commentary sound easy. Finally, good to hear John Filan involved as an expert commentator on ABC radio for the Wanderers v Mariners clash. The message is very clear. If the perception of the game is to improve, the very best people need to be employed in the media.

A Welcome Appointment
The FFA is criticised regularly for some of its appointments but everybody would agree the presence of Peter Tredinnick on the FFA board is a move in the right direction. With his vast legal experience and business exposure, the former Socceroo will bring a lot to the table. Most importantly, his football pedigree will be a valuable asset. Maybe, the time is rapidly approaching for the FFA to compare the credentials of other former Socceroots, like Ray Baartz, with the current incumbents because in the end the game will only progress when the former footballers play a more active role in the management of the game.

One Footed Wonders
Some things never change like left sided players who as tradition will tell you, only use their right legs for standing on. The perfect example was illustrated during the Manchester City v Borussia Dortmund clash last week in the UEFA Champions League.

The City trio of Clichy, Kolarov and Silva were so predictable on the left side, they were easy prey for their opposition as time and again they lost possession due to their limited technique and inability to switch the play to the right. Apparently, Roberto Mancini couldn't see this, or was he so infatuated with Joe Hart's world class display in the 1-1 result, he was happy to settle for a point despite the weaknesses of these players against top class opposition. In the A-League we have similar culprits like Adama Traore, the Victory left wing back, who had a great opportunity to volley the ball home on his right side against the Heart to level the scores midway through the second half, but because he lacks confidence, reverted to his left side and allowed the defender time to close him down. Surely, as a two footed player during his playing career, this should be chicken feed for Ange Postecoglou to correct.

Average Imports To A-League Will Hurt Home Grown Talent
This was the alleged statement from national coach, Holger Osieck, last week. If Osieck means average imports will deny spots in the A-League for young local players he is correct. The problem is there is not enough talent coming through the system due to poor identification and inadequate coaching at the 13-15 year old development level. The whole coaching structure and



Just in case you watched Fox Sports last weekend and weren't too sure who Gary Philips is. Here he is in action for Sydney Olympic in the NSL back in the '80's. Oscar Crino and Ken Murphy of South Melbourne give chase.

curriculum needs to be overhauled so that more talent is produced in the system and the recent failure of teams like the u/17's can be a thing of the past. On this particular point, the performance of Massimo Luongo as a second half substitute for

IpswichTown against Cardiff City in the English Championship last weekend was enlightening. Obviously this young star realised he had to leave Australia at an early age to develop fully because the system wasn't in place for him to realise his potential.

Thea Slatyer calls time on her football career

Westfield Matildas veteran Thea Slatyer has decided to call an end to her remarkable 14 year club and international career.

With 51 A-Internationals to her name including three goals, Slatyer helped define a key transition period in the sport which culminated in captaining the successful Westfield Matildas in two matches at the 2010 AFC Women's Asian Cup.

As a dominating and often imposing defender Slatyer was a fierce competitor with incredible strength and determination whenever she wore the green and gold. A key member in the Westfield Matildas groundbreaking performances at the 2007 FIFA Women's World Cup Slatyer has been a significant influence both on and off the field in growing the reputation and profile of the team. With her striking looks and unflinching attitude, Slatyer caught the eye of many admirers which saw her appear in a range of editorial and profile pieces including in Women's Health, Cosmopolitan and Madison magazines.

Slatyer's career highlight was playing in the 2004 Athens Olympics. With a playing career that saw Slatyer play for Clubs including Canberra United, Sydney FC, Newcastle Jets and overseas with Washington Freedom. Slatyer played her final three matches earlier this year against



Photo: PAUL LAU

World Champions Japan following two matches against New Zealand where she scored a late equaliser to keep intact the Westfield Matildas 18-year undefeated record against their trans-Tasman rivals. It was following the Japan match that Slatyer decided to hang up her boots for good. A decision that sees one of the greats of the women's game leave a wonderful legacy for the sport. Outside of football Slatyer has always lead an intrepid life includ-

ing working as an industrial rope access technician on skyscrapers and in the mines and offshore oil rigs, an aerospace Non Destructive Testing technician, as a mounted security officer for the Australian Turf Club, personal private bodyguard and a DJ. Although being offered both a new contract to continue playing for the Westfield Matildas and interest from Chelsea and Liverpool in the Women's Premier League in England, Thea has decided to

pursue a different course away from football. "Retiring from football was something I had been planning at the start of this year and the international friendly against Japan was to be my last game. Although I did not want to make it more emotional for myself than it already was, a few of my team mates knew this was likely to be the last time I put on the green and gold and I officially retired from the Matildas following the Tokyo tour in July," said Slatyer.

"The National team has played a monumental role in my life for the past decade and it has taken me places and given me friends that I will have forever. I am now focussing on studying engineering, horse riding and generally just kicking ass in whatever life brings. "The most important thing I've learned from my experiences in the Matildas is to take advantage of every opportunity you are presented with, trust yourself and never ever give up." Westfield Matildas coach Tom Sermanni, who coached Slatyer for the majority of her international career, knows that Slatyer has left an indelible mark on the Australian national team. "Thea is a winner, a warrior and a fierce competitor. She was uncompromising in her approach and attitude and at the peak of her career was one of the most intimidating defenders in women's football. These qualities were particularly in evidence when facing high pedigree opponents," said Sermanni. "Like several of our key players she was blighted by a series of serious knee injuries that curtailed her number of international appearances and career longevity. Despite this, her ability to recover from injury in record time highlighted her determination, professionalism and her desire to represent her country. "Thea was without question of our most important players over the

past eight years." Long-time friend and Westfield Matildas teammate Sarah Walsh grew up playing with Slatyer continued the praise. "I played with Thea all the way back during a time when I was bigger than her," said Walsh. "I feel privileged to have been on her football journey from the start, she has had some very big moments for the Matilda's including our game against Norway at the 2007 World Cup being one that really showed what a talented and powerful player she is." Matildas captain Melissa Barbieri continued the praise for the retiring star. "Strong, formidable, relentless determination and an experienced and level head in the back line is how Thea Slatyer will be remembered," said Barbieri. "Thea always helped teammates through tough times whilst she herself was battling through injuries. "In her 10 years since debuting for the Matildas, T has helped shape the 'Never Say Die' attitude we go by today, not only on the field but off it as well, always trying to better herself in more ways than just football. It wouldn't have surprised me if she might one day fly into camp on a jet plane.. Our own Superwoman! Slatyer is currently spending her time between her house in Sydney and working as an industrial rope access technician in the mines Western Australia.

NEW DIRECTORS APPOINTED TO FFA BOARD
Football Federation Australia (FFA) has announced the appointment of two new directors to the FFA Board. • Peter Tredinnick, a partner in corporate law firm Moray & Agnew and a former Socceroo international • Chris Rex, Managing Director and CEO of Ramsay Health Care and a former Sydney FC director Peter is appointed to a casual vacancy following the recent decision of Ron Walker to retire after nine years of service. Chris fills the third appointed director position provided for under the FFA's Constitution.

HUTCHINSON TICKLED PINK WITH MILESTONE APPEARANCE
NEW Central Coast captain John Hutchinson will become just the second player in Mariners history to reach the 150 Hyundai A-League game mark for the Club this Sunday. Hutchinson follows good friend and former Mariners skipper Alex Wilkinson into the 150 game club, and will celebrate his considerable achievement in the team's specially designed pink kits in support of Pink Ribbon Day. Like Wilkinson, Maltese international Hutchinson has spent his entire Hyundai A-League playing career with Central Coast. Only a brief loan spell with then Chinese Super League side Chengdu Blades in 2011 interrupted his time with the Mariners. The Morwell born midfielder was shocked when told of the milestone he is set to accomplish against Perth Glory. "I didn't actually expect it this season," Hutchinson said. "I didn't know I was that close to it." "I've had some great times (at the Mariners). We've had the two league Championships, a Pre-Season Cup win as well, and obviously we've had the heartbreak of a few Grand Finals here and there." "But it's a great Club. It's been an honour to be here and play for them, and now to be Club Captain is a great honour as well. My 150th just makes me feel that little bit older!"

JETS REACH 11K MEMBERS
The Hunter Ports Newcastle Jets is pleased to announce they have surpassed the Club's Membership goal of 11,000 Members for the 2012/13 A-League season. The current tally of 11,007 eclipses the Newcastle Jets' previous record of 10,228 Members set during the 2011/12 season. For the second year running, the Newcastle Jets have the second highest Membership base in the A-League, behind only the Melbourne Victory. The figure also mean the Jets have more Members than many National Rugby League Clubs. Jets captain Jobe Wheelhouse thanked all those who have come on board to become Jets Members this season.

FIFA FUTSAL WORLD CUP THAILAND 2012 LIVE ON SBS The FIFA Futsal World Cup Thailand 2012, featuring Australia's own Futsalroos, will be LIVE on SBS from Friday 2 November. SBS will broadcast all of Australia's games live and in prime time, including the group stage matches against Italy, Mexico and Argentina, as well as the semi-finals and the final. The FIFA Futsal World Cup 2012 is the 7th edition and will be Australia's 6th appearance at a FIFA Futsal World Cup. Defending champions Brazil are the most successful team, having won four of the six previous tournaments.	
Friday 2 November 2012 – SBS TWO Italy v Australia 8:55pm	Friday 16 November 2012 – SBS TWO Semi Final 1 & 2 8:55pm
Monday 5 November 2012 – SBS TWO Australia v Mexico 8:55pm	Sunday 18 November 2012 – SBS TWO Final 11:00pm
Thursday 8 November 2012 – SBS TWO Australia v Argentina 8:55pm	

Couch Potato

* ALL TIMES ARE AEDT



SBS ONE
Saturday, 13 October
 10:45 am 2014 FIFA World Cup Qualifier:
Argentina v Uruguay.

Monday October 15th
 11:00 pm The World Game

SBS TWO
Monday October 15th
 9:30 pm The World Game

Wednesday 24 October
SBS ONE
 5.30am (aedt) Live - UEFA Champions
 League: Barcelona v Celtic.

SBS TWO
 9.30pm - UEFA Champions League:
 Barcelona v Celtic. (Repeat)

Thursday 25 October
SBS ONE
 5.30am (aedt) Live - UEFA Champions
 League: Borussia Dortmund v Real Ma-
 drid.

Saturday 13-Oct
*World Cup Qualifier UEFA FYR Macedo-
 nia v Croatia 5:25am **LIVE***
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Ecuador
 v Chile 7:55am **LIVE***
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Bolivia
 v Peru 10:00am 1st Airing*
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Colom-
 bia v Paraguay 11:45am 1st Airing*
*World Cup Qualifier UEFA England v San
 Marino 1:45pm 1st Airing*
*World Cup Qualifier UEFA Greece v
 Bosnia 3:30pm 1st Airing*

SUNDAY 14TH OCTOBER
Blue Square Premier Round 15
Gateshead v Cambridge 6:00 AM 1st
Airing

WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER
World Cup Qualifier UEFA Poland v
England 5:55 AM **LIVE**
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Para-
 guay v Peru 8:55 AM **LIVE***
World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Chile v
Argentina 11:00 AM **LIVE**
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Bolivia
 v Uruguay 1:00 PM 1st Airing*
World Cup Qualifier UEFA Croatia v
Wales 3:45 PM 1st Airing
World Cup Qualifier UEFA Belgium v
Scotland 5:30 PM 1st Airing
World Cup Qualifier UEFA Highlights Show
7:30 PM

THURSDAY 18TH OCTOBER
*World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Venezu-
 ela v Ecuador 12:45 AM 1st Airing*

FRIDAY 19TH OCTOBER
Bundesliga Round 8 Preview Show 7:00
PM

Friday12th Oct
 02:30 am The Serie A Highlights Show
 03:00 am Arsenal TV
 08:00 am Bundesliga Weekly Highlights

Saturday 13th Oct
 05:30 am The Serie A Highlights Show

Sunday 14th Oct
 06:00 am Arsenal TV

Monday 15th Oct
 03:00 am Bundesliga Weekly Highlights
 12:30 pm The Serie A Highlights Show

Tuesday 16th Oct
 03:00 am Arsenal TV

Thursday 18th Oct
 02:00 am Magic Of The FA Cup
 03:00 am Bundesliga
 05:00 am Bundesliga Weekly Highlights

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE **LIVE**
Times listed are 7 minutes prior to kick-offs.

English Premier League
 No matches scheduled this week due to
 international fixtures.

WEEK 9
Sat Oct 20 Tottenham v Chelsea
10.38 pm Fox 1
Sun Oct 21 Manchester United v Stoke
12.53 am Fox 1
Sun Oct 21 Fulham v Aston Villa
12.53 am Viewers Choice
Sun Oct 21 Liverpool v Reading
12.53 am Viewers Choice
Sun Oct 21 West Brom v Manchester City
12.53 am Viewers Choice
Sun Oct 21 West Ham v Southampton
12.53 am Viewers Choice
Sun Oct 21 Swansea v Wigan
1.00 pm DELAY
Sun Oct 21 Norwich v Arsenal
3.23 am Fox 1
Sun Oct 21 Sunderland v Newcastle
11.23 pm Fox 3
Mon Oct 22 QPR v Everton
1.53 am Fox 3

World Cup Qualifier
 Iraq v Australia
 Wednesday 17 October
 3.30 am
 Fox 1

Hyundai A-League
 All games **LIVE**

Oct 12 Adelaide v Western Sydney 7.30 pm
 Oct 13 Sydney v Newcastle 5.30 pm
 Oct 13 Brisbane v Victory 7.30 pm
 Oct 14 Melb Heart v Wellington 3.00 pm
 Oct 14 Central Coast v Perth 5.00 pm

FOX SPORTS FC
 Every Tuesday 8.30 pm

Round 02: ASK THE EXPERTS

SANTO CILAURO **02**

Adelaide Utd
 Draw
 Brisbane Roar
 Melbourne Heart
 Draw
Last week: 2

CRAIG MACKENZIE **01**

Adelaide Utd
 Sydney FC
 Brisbane Roar
 Melb Heart
 Draw
Last week: 1

EDDIE KRNEVIC **01**

Adelaide Utd-
 Draw
 Draw
 Melb Heart
 Mariners
Last week: 1

PETER KATHOLOS **01**

Adelaide Utd
 Sydney FC
 Melb Victory
 Draw
 Draw
Last week: 1

ROGER SLEEMAN **03**

Adelaide Utd
 Sydney FC
 Brisbane Roar
 Melb Heart
 Draw
Last week: 3

ANDY HARPER **01**

WSW
 Sydney FC
 Draw
 Heart
 Draw
Last week: 1

JOHN DOYLE **01**

Adelaide Utd
 Sydney FC
 Brisbane Roar
 Phoenix
 Perth Glory
Last week: 1

KISS OF DEATH **02**

Adelaide Utd
 Sydney FC
 Draw
 Helb Heart
 Draw
Last week: 2

FAN POLL
Last week's question:
 Which import player will fair
 best in the A-League?

This week's question:
 Which club will win the VPL
 Grand Final?
 A) Dandenong Thunder
 B) Oakleigh Cannons

Results
33.3% Shinji Ono
33.3% Marcos Flores
33.3% Jeronimo Neumann

Cast your vote at www.goalweekly.com
 and be in the running to win
 A-League match tickets.

SPOT THE BALL



How to Play: First, you need to 'Like' the Goal! Weekly Facebook page.
 Then, add your answer under comments of this photo on the GW wall.
 Those who submit the correct answer will go into a draw to win
 two A-League match tickets. Correct answer will be revealed on GW
 Facebook. Winner notified by email and in next week's edition of GW.
 Last week's winner: Believe it not, nobody picked it! Answer was N7.



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 Mixed Competition begins Sun 18/11
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Blast From The Past



By Roy Hay

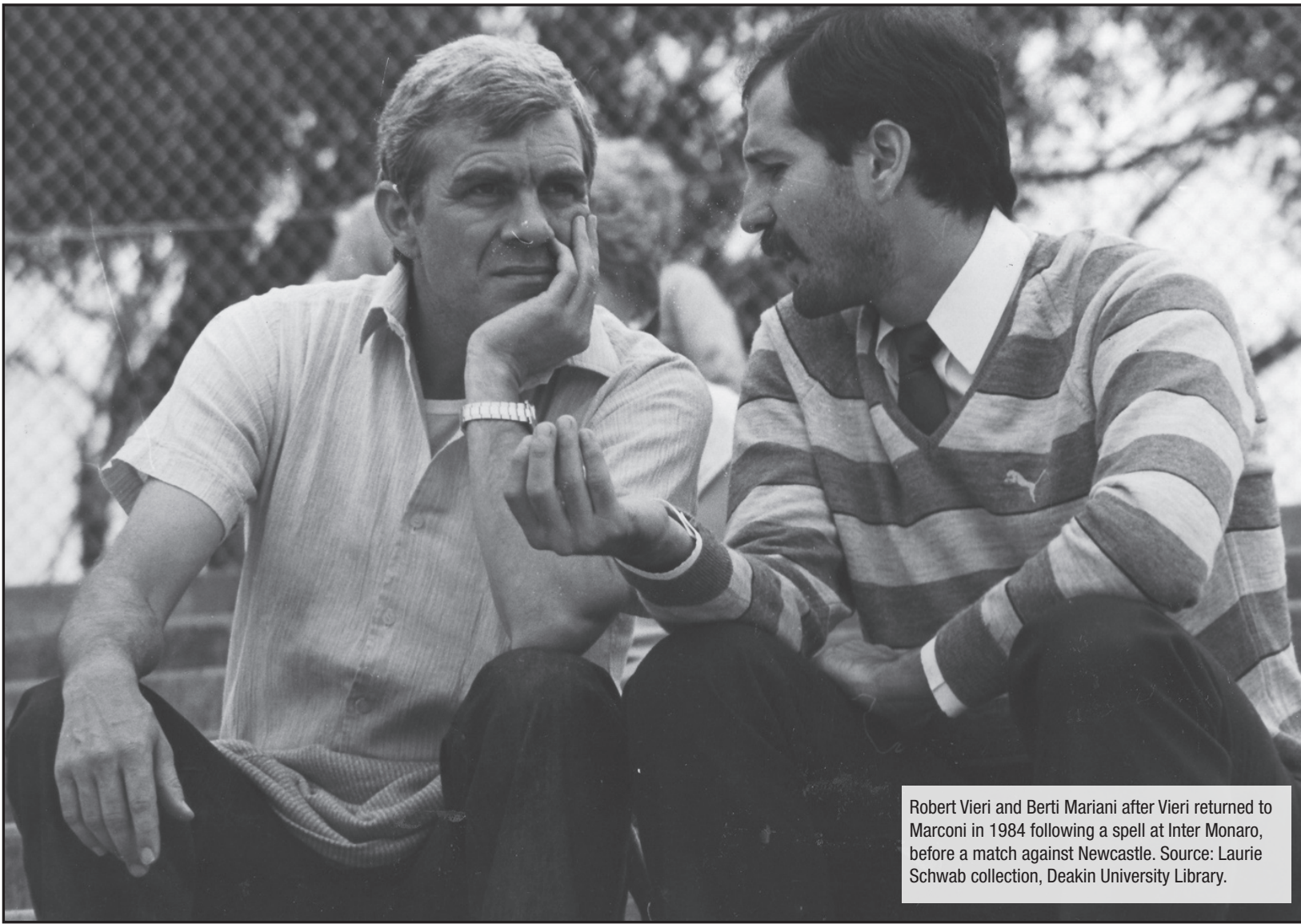
Alessandro del Piero is one of the biggest stars to come to Australia to play the game for a local club, but he had a number of predecessors and one who had a huge influence was Roberto Vieri. Not only did Vieri light up the game in this country in the 1970s and 1980s, but he and his wife produced a son, Christian, born in Italy, raised in Australia, who was to go on the return journey to Italy, Europe and the World as one of the leading strikers of all time. A boy who grew up idolising Alan Border, captain of the Australian cricket team, became one of Australia's greatest soccer exports. The Vieris' other son Max played for Australia.

Vieri senior was born in Prato in Tuscany in Italy on 14 February 1946 and was picked up by Fiorentina as a youngster. He played for his local club and then Sampdoria, Juventus and AS Roma. Juventus paid over 800 million lira and two players to secure his transfer, an Italian record in 1969. He played five games for the Italian Under-23s. He had a spell at Bologna from 1973, winning the Coppa Italia in 1973-74, before coming to Australia in 1977.

He joined Marconi in the second season of the National Soccer League. Marconi's sponsor Buton Industries financed the transfer and Rale Rasic coached a midfield which included Socceroo skipper Jimmy Rooney, Ray Richards, Gary Byrne and Vieri. Jimmy Rooney remembers Vieri. 'He was a genius. His touch on the ball was superb. He could always find space and his passing was second to none.' Unable to train like the rest of the players, Vieri was nursed through the season by Rasic. Marconi finished fourth on the ladder that year but reached the grand final only to go down to Hakoah by four goals to two, with Vieri scoring one of the Marconi goals.

When South Melbourne played Marconi at Middle Park on Sunday 5 August 1979, Vieri lined up alongside Edi Krncevic, Tony Henderson, Mark Jankovics, Berti Mariani, Gary Byrne and Allan Maher in a powerful visiting line-up. South had a tasty team too including George Christopoulos, Chris Kalafatis, Alun Evans, Duncan Cummings, George Campbell and Frank Munro. Marconi led the league by four points from Brisbane City with Jankovics the leading scorer with 13 goals, followed by Krncevic (9 goals) and Peter Sharne with 7. The South program that day noted, 'The remarkable aspect of Marconi's performance is the support players are offering to each other on the field ... Tireless worker in midfield Byrne compensates for maestro Vieri whose superb playmaking abilities have always been praiseworthy.' Marconi won

Roberto Vieri: Italian superstar in Australia



Robert Vieri and Berti Mariani after Vieri returned to Marconi in 1984 following a spell at Inter Monaro, before a match against Newcastle. Source: Laurie Schwab collection, Deakin University Library.



Roberto Vieri on the attack against South Melbourne, with George Campbell in the background. Photo: Les Shorrock. Les Shorrock collection, Deakin University Library.



Marconi in 1978. Roberto Vieri (second from right in front row). Source: Soccer Life, Volume 1, Issue 1, August 1978, pp. 32-33.

two-one with goals by Tony Henderson and Edi Krncevic while Mendo Ristovski scored for Hellas. The Vieris returned to Italy in 1981-82 but Robert was back at Marconi in the 1982 season. In 1983 he moved to Inter Monaro in Queanbeyan as player-coach and then returned to Marconi as a

coach. Vieri was senior coach at Marconi through the 1987 season and despite a year disrupted by injuries took the team to fourth place in the league. In the late 1980s young Christian was beginning to make his mark in the Marconi junior teams and the family went back to Italy where he was snapped up by

Torino. That began a career that would take Christian to league titles in Italy and Spain and two World Cups for Italy and a string of individual honours. His younger brother Massimiliano (Max) was born in Australia in 1978 and represented Australia in six games in 2004-05. Most of Max's club football was played

in Italy including spells at Verona, Napoli and Lecce. The current president of Football Federation Victoria, Nick Monteleone, remembers seeing Roberto Vieri play at Thomastown in the Victorian State League. Vieri succeeded Frank McAleer as coach of the club in Round 21 of the 1989 season. He also had a

brief spell as caretaker coach at Parramatta Eagles in the NSL in 1990-91 season. All in all Roberto Vieri made a huge contribution to the Australian game and it will be wonderful if Del Piero can match that in coming years. My thanks to John Punshon and Jimmy Rooney for assistance with this column.



Robert Vieri in a shot for the coaching manual, lining up a cross. Source: Laurie Schwab collection, Deakin University Library.

It's Aussie Jack at long, long last



JACKSON Irvine was expected to make his long-awaited Aussie debut overnight in the Young Socceroos' friendly in Portugal against the host nation's under-20 national side.

The match was played at the Municipal Stadium in Maffra and the teams will clash again on Sunday at the National Stadium in Lisbon.

This is the springboard for head coach Paul Okon and his young men to go into battle in the AFC Under-19 finals in the United Arab Emirates from 1 to 17 November where the Aussies are in Group D alongside Saudi Arabia, Syria and Qatar.

The top two teams from each group progress to the knockout stage (quarter-finals) and all four semi-finalists automatically qualify for the FIFA Under-20 World Cup to be held in Turkey from 21 June to 13 July 2013.

And fans of the impressive Curtis Good can rest assured that he joined up with the Aussie squad in Portugal despite not being in the initial 23-man party named by Okon and posted on the FFA website on 3 October.

Earlier this year the former Melbourne Heart starlet signed a six-year contract with English giant Newcastle United worth more than \$4.7 million and Heart will receive a \$A600,000-plus transfer fee for the teenage central defender.

It appears that Newcastle was tardy in responding to FFA overtures for Good's release but that matter has been resolved.

The Geordie press already have labelled the former VIS and AIS youngster "a young Jaap Stam" and he no doubt will play a pivotal part in Okon's plans.

Irvine recently made his SPL senior debut at Celtic coming off the bench at half-time in early September in a 2-2 draw with Hibs.

Irvine played three under-19 internationals for Scotland last year but on 2 January this year he went on public record declaring his allegiance to Australia on this journal's website.

Nevertheless the former Frankston Pines star found himself in the midst of controversy last month when news of his apparent defection finally broke in Scotland.

And at the centre of the furore was the infamous Daily Record, Scotland's national tabloid and a publication I would never accuse of letting the truth get in the way of a good story.

It had been reported that Irvine was born in Aberdeen and had turned his back on the land of his birth but the 19-year-old put that to rest by telling the tabloid that he was born in Melbourne. In fact it was his dad Steve who was from Aberdeen.

Irvine is now firmly on FFA's radar. He drove from Glasgow to Edinburgh in August for the Socceroos' friendly with Scotland at Easter Road and met national coach Holger Osieck and the Australian players.

He may well be the missing piece of the jigsaw for Okon in what shapes as the most talented batch of under-20s we've seen for years.

And if enthusiasm is anything to go by then Irvine has plenty to offer.

"It's absolutely brilliant to think I have the possibility of playing for Australia after all the madness and controversy surrounding my decision to leave Scotland," he said before jetting out of Glasgow earlier this week.

"I'm glad that's all behind me and I now have my first chance to show the Australian coaches what I can do.

"It's going to be very competitive for places in the starting 11 (against Portugal) and even for the squad travelling to the UAE as there are many well-established internationals but I'm prepared to work especially hard to prove I deserve a place."

Irvine's versatility opens up Okon's options as the youngster can play in midfield or defence.

"Position wise I am still more than comfortable in both centre midfield and at centre half so whichever position the coaches feel I can contribute most to the way they want to play will likely be the one I play in."

And Irvine won't have too much trouble fitting in with his new teammates.

"It's going to be very competitive for places in the starting 11 (against Portugal) and even for the squad travelling to the UAE as there are many well-established internationals but I'm prepared to work especially hard to prove I deserve a place."

"Curtis Good and I played together for many years at a young age, Jamie MacLaren and I have known each other for years as well and I know Luke O'Dea from our time at Melbourne Victory."

I've long sung the praises of this group and we saw their potential in November last year when they strolled through their AFC qualifying tournament in Malaysia.

That tournament marked a few Young Socceroo debuts among

them Blackburn's MacLaren and Western Sydney recruit Reece Cairra (then with Aston Villa) and both were very impressive.

MacLaren scored four goals in three games as Australia easily qualified for the finals and he was named the find of the tournament by outgoing youth coach Jan Versleijen.

The games against Portugal will give Okon and his staff a first-hand view of how many of the overseas-based players fit into the playing structure demanded of them.

Sydney FC's exciting youngster Terry Antonis was a late withdrawal after suffering concussion in last weekend's A-League opener in New Zealand against Wellington Phoenix.

Irvine's parents have travelled from Melbourne and are in Portugal watching their son in action while MacLaren's parents will be in the UAE for the November tournament.

Let's hope they'll soon be arranging travel plans and accommodation in Turkey for 2013.

Grand finale to VPL

WELL done to Melbourne Heart and FFV for staging this year's VPL Grand Final on Sunday after Heart's clash with Wellington Phoenix at AAMI Park.

The VPL showdown features championship winning Dandenong Thunder against Oakleigh Cannons in what looms as a battle royal.

I can't think of a much better stage on which to display the showpiece event of Victorian club football and for Heart to agree to play second fiddle to the Grand Final speaks volumes for its support for the local game.

Heart CEO Scott Munn said this week that his club had budgeted for a 7000 crowd but was hoping to get 9000-plus after last weekend's season-opening derby success.

If those figures are reached I wonder how much can be attributed to the derby rather than the fanaticism and loyalty of the football-loving Albanian community that supports Thunder.

"We've got the largest support in the competition and if we don't bring 3500 or 4000 to Sunday's game then I'll go home," said Thunder head coach Chris Taylor.

"It can be like having an extra man out there and their passion is unrivalled."

Thunder already has won the league title and State Knockout Cup this year and is trying to become the first Victorian men's team in 31 years to win the treble.

Taylor has also tasted personal success by winning his second VPL Coach of the Year award at FFV's annual Gold Medal Night presentation earlier this week.

The award was voted on by his peers and is thoroughly deserved but special mention should be made of the coaching efforts of one of Taylor's best friends, Dean Hennessy.

There are not many coaches out there who have won promotion to the VPL with four different clubs – Essendon, Richmond, Bentleigh Greens and Southern Stars.

But perhaps Hennessy's greatest



Jackson Irvine prepares for take-off from Glasgow to Lisbon.

achievement was keeping Southern Stars in the VPL this year under the most testing of circumstances.

Hennessy had brought the Turkish-backed club up from State Two South East to State One and to the VPL in successive seasons.

His success was in no small part due to a group of Irish players and his admiration for this group has not diminished.

"They have been fabulous to work with and some of these lads have been with me for three years. The great thing about them is you know exactly what you're going to get week in, week out," said Hennessy.

"But it's not just the Irish lads it's the entire group that has been absolutely wonderful this year."

What is not commonly known is that the Southern Stars players were called to a meeting in the first half of the season and told that their wages were being slashed to \$150 a game.

If there was to be a catalyst for a mass exodus then surely this was it.

Within a fortnight another meeting was held and the players were told that the club could afford \$220 a game.

Such upheaval formed the backdrop to an astonishing effort by Hennessy's side when it became the first club to inflict a VPL defeat on Thunder this season.

Southern Stars players deserve enormous credit for sticking by a club that breached agreements with them and for saving the club from relegation.

And Hennessy's man-management skills also are worthy of mention.

He's certainly not flying under the radar since the Stars' season has ended and he's been tapped by rival VPL clubs and State League One clubs.

Whether he stays with Southern Stars is in the lap of the gods or to be more accurate in the hands of the new committee which is aware

of the financial needs to remain competitive in the VPL and is attempting to rejig the club's finances to that end.

Hats off to MPNG

ON A personal note I want to thank a brave publisher called Cameron McCullough and the Mornington Peninsula News Group.

I'm unaware of any other suburban paper that allocates a half-page to our sport in every edition but that's what MPNG did this year in the Frankston Times.

The publication is fortnightly and throughout the Victorian winter season it carried my wrap-up of the six clubs in the local area.

I think it's important that McCullough is recognised for his contribution to our sport. More power to those of his ilk.

Congratulations to Craig for winning the Best News Article Award for the second time in three years at the FFV's Gold Medal Night last Monday night.

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The last round of the 2012 Nike V-League and Pascoe Vale FC have wrapped up their 3rd premiership, following a 7-3 victory over FC Collingwood in a catch-up match played last Friday. In other catch-up matches on the night Vic Vipers defeated Brunswick FC 4-2 and FC Prahran accounted for FC Balwyn 8-2.

FC Collingwood take the points from CF Brunswick

An Adam Orme hat-trick has helped inspire his team to a 6-5 victory over CF Brunswick. With both teams at the bottom of the table it was important for CF Brunswick to win to avoid the relegation playoffs. As a result it was 2-2 in the opening 10mins of the match. Collingwood took a 4-3 lead into half time and it was the odd goal that always separated the teams throughout the match. The loss for Brunswick has now forced them in the relegation playoff along with Collingwood and Albert Park.

FC Collingwood 6 (Adam Orme 3, Fleiful Habib 2, Alex Avrigen) def. CF Brunswick 5 (Duke Duva 2, Yaw Nana, Ryan Fillipovic, Mathieu Piga)

FC Prahran to strong for relegated Elsternwick FC

Elsternwick FC were playing for pride after their fate was sealed last week against FC Collingwood. Prahran have looked dangerous since the return of influential star Maxi Avram, it has also seen Richie Ferguson have a new lease of life as both players feed well off one another. Not much could separate the teams at half time the scores were locked at 2-2 with both team working hard in defence it was a battle to retain the ball. In the second half FC Prahran made their chances count as the banged in 6 goals to secure the points, Prahran did get a late conciliation goal as the game finished 8-3

FC Prahran 8 (Richard Ferguson 2, Cameron Holmes, Maxi Avram, Sim Rahim, Ben Armstrong) def. FC Elsternwick 3 (Kurt Marotta 2, Steve Nicolaidis)

Pascoe Vale FC ensure happy ending as they finish the season defeating Metropolitan

Metropolitan FC started the match the stronger of the two and opened the scoring with two sublime finishes by Alexander Stevanovic to give Metropolitan and early lead. Pascoe Vale than came to life and lead by their top scorer Joao Da Silva they went in to the break leading 6-5 in an game that seem to be all about attack. In the second it was more of the same as the high scoring continued. Pascoe Vale scored the goal of the night with a fine one touch passing move that started in their own half

Pascoe Vale FC Clinch Third Premiership!



Nike V-League premiers Pascoe Vale FC



Fleiful Habib of FC Collingwood's free kick goes through the CF Brunswick wall and into the back of the net during the Nike V-League round 22.

and resulted in a back post tap in after 6 or 7 passes. Metropolitan tried in vein to the draw level but looked to run out of ideas when they went to the 5th man power play. Injured captain Andre Caro was delighted to have won the league as he spoke with us after the game "This is our third premiership and was one of the toughest seasons I have played in the Nike V-League, every week was a battle and we are so happy to have won it and to finish the season with a victory" "The team have had some good results this season plus we won the FAFL cup two weeks ago and on Friday we have the League Cup verse our biggest rivals Vic Vipers so hopefully we can win that and retain the trophy"

Pascoe Vale FC 9 (Joao Da Silva 4, Ernie Simsek 2, Kasra Majbourni, Brenno Polatti, James Blackburn) def. Metropolitan FC 7 (Alexander Stevanovic 2, Dino Redzepovic 2, Jusuf Avdic, Alija Redzepovic, Tomoslav Grigic)

Vic Vipers get lucky to share the points with Albert Park

Albert Park nearly saved there best for last as the pushed the much-fancied Vic Vipers all the way. Albert Park lead by Francis Ho caused the Vipers defence havoc all game, and it was that man Ho who opened the scoring after a well worked counter attack found him free on the top of the "D" and he slotted past Christos Apostolakis in the Vipers goal to give Albert Park a deserved. Ho added a second with a fine finish from an acute angle not long after to extend Albert Parks lead. Vic Vipers had no answers and it was left to Adam

Cooper to fire long range efforts at the Albert Park goal. Minutes before half time and the upset looked on when Brandon Khenkitisak added a third for Albert Park.

The second half was a different story as the Vipers began to look like a team sitting at the top of the table. Vipers got on the board with hard working Target Ricardo Castro pressured Albert Park keeper Jamie Tran in to a poor clearance that Castro pounced on and put into an empty net giving the Vipers a glimmer of hope. The Vipers than pulled another back through Adam Cooper and it was game on as the Vipers were coming. With 6 minutes left Ricardo Castro drew Vipers level as Albert Park were running out of legs. We were set for a dramatic finish and with 20 seconds left Ricardo Castro nearly scored a sensational bicycle kick hit the post. The match ended 3-3 and was a fair result, but one Albert Park will look back on as one that got away.

Vic Vipers FC 3 (Ricardo Castro 2, Adam Cooper) drew with. Albert Park FC 3 (Francis Ho 2, Brendan Khenkitisak)

FC Balwyn win by the odd goal over FC Essendon

FC Balwyn solid end to the season finished on a good note with a hard fought victory over FS Essendon. The first half saw seven goals scored thanks double strikes from captain Tony Imeri and Mark Saric for Balwyn, for Essendon Dushan Dimic got a double and Ignat Filipovic rounded off the scoring for the first half. In the second half both team found it hard to get going and as a result there was no real intensity in the game and the goals dried up with both team only adding a goal a piece in during the



Alexander Stevanovic of Metropolitan Fc tells Pascoe Vale's Felipe Tashashi to be quiet.

20mins

FC Balwyn 5 (Tony Imeri 2, Mark Saric 2, Tony Saric) def. FC Essendon 4 (Dushan Dimic 2, Ignat Filipovic, Taylan Aksoy)

Hume FC outclass Ashburton

Matthew Vragovski scored an impressive hat-trick that help lead his side Hume FC to victory, this also meant they finished above Ashburton in the final table. Ashburton struggled to match Hume enthusiasm and really had no ideas how to break-down the Hume defence. League

top scorer Sofiane Soufi also struggled to get into the game as his every move was covered by Hume star Resit Culculoglu. Hume took the points after finding the net six time with some great team goals, while Ashburton will walk away disappointed to end the season with a loss.

Hume FC 6 (Matthew Vragoski 3, Sacid Cicek 2, Vadim Mazursky) def. Ashburton 3 (Matteo Rocca, Robert Armellini, Julien Afonseca)

V-League Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Pascoe Vale FC	22	19	1	2	152	68	+84	58
2 Vic Vipers FC	22	15	5	2	109	65	+44	50
3 FC Balwyn	22	15	2	5	130	82	+48	47
4 Metropolitan FC	22	13	1	8	138	119	+19	40
5 Hume FC	22	13	0	9	114	83	+31	39
6 Ashburton FC	22	12	1	9	119	116	+3	37
7 FC Prahran	22	9	3	10	96	97	-1	30
8 FC Essendon	22	7	2	13	95	129	-34	23
9 CF Brunswick	22	7	1	14	85	105	-20	22
10 Albert Park FC	22	4	4	14	83	119	-36	16
11 FC Collingwood	22	5	0	17	80	136	-56	15
12 Elsternwick FC	22	3	0	19	95	177	-82	9

Round 22 RESULTS Wed 10th Oct

- 6:30 FC Collingwood 6 - 5 CF Brunswick
- 7:20 FC Prahran 8 - 3 Elsternwick FC
- 8:10 Metropolitan FC 7 - 9 Pascoe Vale FC
- 9:00 Vic Vipers FC 3 - 3 Albert Park FC
- 9:50 FC Essendon 4 - 5 FC Balwyn
- 10:40 Hume FC 6 - 3 Ashburton FC

F0z Cup CLASHES Wed 17th Oct

- 7:20pm - Pascoe Vale FC vs. FC Essendon
- 8:10pm - Vic Vipers FC vs. FC Prahran
- 9:00pm - Balwyn vs. Ashburton
- 9:50pm - Metropolitan FC vs. Hume FC

Top Goal Scorers

- Sofiane Soufi (Ashburton FC) - 50 Goals
- Alexander Stevanovic (Metropolitan FC) - 36 Goals
- Dino Redzepovic (Metropolitan FC) - 33 Goals
- Joao Da Silva (Pascoe Vale) - 32 Goals
- Ben Bodo (FC Balwyn) - 29 Goal
- Alija Redzepovic (Metropolitan FC) - 27 Goals

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Mike Lilikakis

Avondale College Le Tour de Force

"Being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Philippians 1:6

I was honoured beyond belief to have been asked by the editor of this fine publication to document my thoughts upon this parchment the matters concerning the Avondale College History tour of France and England. Moreover, since the opportunity and blessings from above allowed me to travel onwards to Crete; the birthplace of the Lilikakis name and thus bestow more graces that I may hopefully exegete on a personal level who we are, where we come from and what purpose we have, before we shuffle off this mortal coil...

I have always loved being alive. The adventures we have as we breathe should be enough to pump the soul of a man. I've always been nostalgic about the birthplaces of Vercingetorix, the Gauls and the battles of Alesia and Gergovia. Goscinnny and Uderzo have a lot to answer for. Just ask Obelix to ask Asterix to Getafix of the good stuff. There is many a moment where I've seen mistletoe



hanging off an oak, and wondered what is within thy magic elixir of life?

We landed with zero sleep. I can't sleep in planes, trains or automobiles. After a 20-hour flight one doesn't dream of wandering the streets of Paris, no matter how gay it is. Paris has culture in spades. The Cluny Museum and Cathedral of Notre Dame have a majestic blend of sophistication and impermanent art. Saint Chappelle would make Ian, Greg and Trevor weep with rivers of tears. The height, grandeur, symmetry, scale and colours that irradiate within absolutely and irrevocably mystify and dazzle the senses. One cannot help but be amazed with mankind's attempt to reach the heavens and take one step closer to God.

The Louvre is a bucket list's dream. With its size and imaginative, edifying peace, the harmony that blends within leaves other artistic edifices for dead. I thoroughly enjoyed my Parisian walks. The attraction of stopping into a local café and watching the world pass by is beyond compare. Listening into conversations is a voyeuristic delight, as one picks up more about politics, sport and the doldrums of the daily grind with more veracity than the Muppet Show we know as 'Foxtel'.

Our esteemed Professor, (Dr.

Reynaud) is cut from a different cloth of the good ol' school, and so the younger plebs were encouraged to go envisage the sights, smells, muck and mire of the back streets in their spare time, that they too, may grow some grey hair. Since I have locks of grey hair, I was already there within, without, up and about smooching and mooching with the savour of the Parisian flock. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times..." Truly I be Charles V. What The Dickens.

From the grandeur of being in the group of Dr. 'Priestley's Posse', we held on fast as we travelled the Parisian Underground, to Les Invalides where I nearly did my nut as some limey wouldn't allow me the courtesy to walk into a room with my camera/tripod. Thankfully, sanity and decorum prevailed and I affronted my own demonic angsts with a café, and then walked back down the Rue St. Germain at a leisurely pace, that I may enjoy the College des Bernardins in relative peace.

'Les Française' love their cafes, patisseries, pharmacies, bars and 'Tabacs' more than life itself. One thing above all, and this be the truth, is make sure you have an iPhone mini (at the least) that you may whack into your ear yonder PROPER tunes which enable

you to savour the proper cultural significance. I have had a double double espresso every day for breakfast with my croissant, and am well fit. WOONOOOOOOOO and opa opa.

Beaumont – Hamel, La Bouiselle & Brettaneux – Fouilloy are an ANZACS wet dream. Notwithstanding the countryside perfection, the fomented narcissism of war cannot be understated in these magnificent towns, which pay blessed homage to the Australian & New Zealand Forces for their efforts in WWI. These fertile fields ridden with craters from massive artillery shells, soak-stained with the rich blood of young men, brought many a teary eye. Of a truth, we romanticize Gallipoli, but these pastures bypass Aussies anonymously. Respect to The Prof. for bringing us here...

Versailles greeted us with soft drizzle and golden gleams draped over the rough cobble stoned roads, which lead to the grand palace of the 'Sun King', Louis XVI. (The world's first true bling bling pimp, penultimate rock-star, Master Illuminati and Freemason Extraordinaire, purveyor of all things mythological who likened himself to Apollo the almighty, wearer of red stilettos, who dedicated himself to wig wearing Olympians, he would've fit in quite



Shabbat with the Church Family in Tours, France was phenomenal.

well next to Paris Hilton and David Beckham on the cover of Vogue.)

Vanity personified, Louis XVI begun the genesis of what we now know as 'Big Brother' to the world. Therein every movement of his day was dictated to a 'live' audience schedule, that they might feel knitted to the bosom of royalty. The 'Hall of Mirrors' and Gardens were a-hands down world wonder, and the only thing lacking was classical or baroque music and a bloody toilet. Seriously, you couldn't take a whizz here to save yourself. "Oh Piss Boy? Where art thou?" Mel Brooks is a gun.

Was gutted that I couldn't check out Mozart's Requiem at 'La Madeleine' as we had to move down to Tours, which itself, is another phenomenon. Chambour Castle is a fairy storyteller's paradise, and well did the Brother's Grimm do their dirty deeds done dirt-cheap right there. A to die for day at the chateau 'Azay le Rideau', the developments highlighted by intimate chocolatiers' ooze and schmooze, along with the Tank Museum at Samur. Geeeeeee....I love France. Chenonceaux was by far the highlight. If one travels to France and bypasses this superlative domicile, they do themselves a massive injustice. The décor, intimacy, colours and intricacy of the place and surrounding woodlands make

this abode the envy of many a civilization. Amboise, the twilight habitation of Leonardo da Vinci also brought out the wonderful gaiety of the French countryside. Of a truth, the travel shags you out good and proper, but it's nothing a rum n raisin ice cream can't sort out. Time truly stands still here.... even though the knacker cream cracker grabs you by three pm and starts dancing on your grave...you can still soldier on with a kick in the googlies and a baguette in yer gob.

...Allow me the courtesy to scoop my Oscars and Pulitzer this week before I start the sequel, as I also need a Greek Coffee and a bowl of Fasolada to energize my Greek psyche.

Blessings et al.

As Always I remain yours sincerely with some reservation;

Ipso Facto

Je ne regret Rien;

MML aka Tsigan FC



VPL GRAND FINAL PREVIEW

By George Stogiannou

This year's VPL grand final between Oakleigh Cannons and Dandenong Thunder is certain to deliver a dramatic season finale for the league's top two performing teams.

One of these two ambitious teams will win a much sought after first ever VPL title. The match gives both teams the opportunity to make up for the bitter disappointment of recent grand final defeats with the Cannons losing grand finalists last year having given up a lead to eventual winners Green Gully. Thunder fans also know the pain of stumbling at the final hurdle when they lost a penalty shoot out to Altona Magic in the 2009 final.

For whoever loses on Sunday, another grand final loss will be a heavy burden to bear.

How the players and coaches of each team cope with the pressure of the grand final on Sunday could play a large part in determining the outcome. Seven of Oakleigh's current squad played in last year's losing grand final side. Oakleigh have a unique duel coach set up with Billy Theodoropoulos and last year's keeper Peter Zois, neither



Dandenong Thunder players celebrate clinching the VPL Minor Premiership after a 0-0 draw with Oakleigh Cannons during the season proper. Photo: GEORGE STOGIANNOU

of whom have coached in a VPL grand final. Thunder on the other hand, have just Shane Rexhepi, Stuart Webster and Veton Korcari as survivors from the losing grand final squad of 2009. Dandenong has the more experienced Chris Taylor at

the helm who although he hasn't coached a VPL premiership team, has coached his team to the minor premiership winning the Coach of the Year award along the way. Taylor was quick to grab underdog status for the Grand Final following the preliminary final win

over Gully, claiming that despite being in no doubt which team had been the better team all season, "In terms of the final, Oakleigh will be red-hot favourites with the week off, the experience of playing in the grand final last year. The pressure is all on them. They've

got everything to play for. We're just going to enjoy the occasion. It's been a great season for us, but I think we've been penalised today. We don't have the luxury, the depth that they've got but I think we'll still give them a game. We're going into it as the firm underdog."

So what sort of game can we expect. If past form is anything to go by, expect a tight, fast paced, low scoring affair. The sides have met three times this season, producing just four goals. In fact the last two encounters have been scoreless draws after the full ninety minutes, with each team scoring once in extra time in the major semi before the game was decided in the Cannons favour by a penalty shoot-out. Neither team has been able to dominate the matches although Thunder has probably created a greater number of chances. The Cannons have played the last two games against Thunder (at George Andrews reserve) using a 4-2-3-1 formation with Ricky Diaco playing the lone striker role. They have pressed Thunder hard and played on the counterattack, trying to take advantage of their speedy wide midfielders, and skilful ball carriers Lambros Honos and Diaco down the middle. Cannons may decide however

to take the game to Thunder at some stage and play two strikers up front, particularly if Thunder is forced to make changes at the back given the possible absence of an injured Craig Elvin and the likely absence of a suspended full back Andrew Mullett. Thunder on the other hand will likely start with its tried and tested 4-4-2 formation with twin spearheads, the quicksilver Nate Foster-Bowen and Golden Boot and Bill Fleming medal winner Luke Sherbon.

The finals have proven costly to the Thunder with the loss of playmaker Matthew Theodore. The Cannons appear to have the deeper squad and this may be a telling factor particularly if the game goes to extra time. Then there's the crowd factor to consider. Dandenong have a large passionate and vocal following. Oakleigh will be hoping to silence them early on and put them out of the equation. If Thunder score first they just may be able to ride home on a wave of emotion.

VPL Grand Final
Oakleigh Cannons
v
Dandenong Thunder
Sunday 14th October 2012
KO 5:30pm AAMI Park



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Latin Wrap

By Francis Fields

Runours rife at Boca Juniors

Mexico is centre stage not only for hosting the 2012 Homeless World Cup. Last weekend, Mexico City witnessed one of the greatest football matches in its calendar - the clásico between Club América and Chivas of Guadalajara.

Familiar face John van 't Schip has had mixed results since arriving at Chivas in the Mexican top flight. This time for the all-Mexican side, its followers were seen celebrating in raptures at the colossal Azteca stadium after defeating its arch-rivals.

Guadalajara benefited from the return from injury of star winger Marco Fabián, an Olympic soccer gold medallist with Mexico in London in August, put the Chivas ahead in the 36th minute. Club America's Colombian international defender Aquivaldo Mosquera failed to clear from a throw-in and the ball was deflected to Fabián who headed it into the net.

The home side equalised three minutes into the second half with a goal by Juan Carlos Medina before a brace from Mexican international forward Rafael Márquez Lugo settled the match for Chivas.

Márquez Lugo shot on the hour took a deflection off defender Diégoo Reyes, another Olympic champion, and wrong-footed goalkeeper Hugo González. Seven minutes later, Reyes was at fault again when Marquez slipped past him to beat González with a drive from outside the box.

Having won 2-1 at home to Tigres UANL two weeks ago after two matches without a win or a goal after a scoreless draw to Pumas UNAM and a 1-0 loss to Pachuca, Chivas are now two wins on the trot.



River Plate fans unveiled a 7.8 kilometre banner early this week and into the Guinness Book of Records.

Known for its all-Mexican player policy the 2010 Copa Libertadores runners-up now lie eighth with 16 points from 12 matches in the Apertura championship table with 4 wins, 4 draws and 4 losses. Chivas are two points behind arch-rivals America and 10 adrift of leaders Toluca before their top-of-the-table clash away to surprise runaway leaders Tijuana.

“The clasico is one (match), what’s also important is the ‘liguilla,’” Canadian-born Dutchman van ‘t Schip said, referring to the eight-team knock-out play-off phase Guadalajara hope to reach.

“It’s very important we finish the (league) championship well and get into the knockout rounds,” he added. The top eight teams qualify for the quarter-finals at the end of the 17-match league phase.

“The spirit in the team is good. Anyone who plays for Chivas must be hungry to play with intensity as we saw today with a team that played that way,” van ‘t Schip said.

“It’s important to win this kind of match for what it means, for its effect on the team’s confidence,

we needed a victory of this magnitude,” Márquez said.

Dutch great Johan Cruyff told Guadalajara fans in a press conference earlier in the week that despite poor results a change of coach would be detrimental to his project for the club, which could take time to bear fruit.

This in reaction to a flood of social media messages by partisan Chivas fans still unhappy about the appointment of the Dutchman. Chivas club owner and entrepreneur Jorge Vergara did however state in his account, “To the fans, thank you for your patience and support for the team. The Dutchmen are showing their coaching qualities”, he wrote.

These last words were in direct response to América coach Miguel Herrera who earlier last week prior to the big match highlighted Van ‘t Schip’s inability to “make a difference”. The former Melbourne Heart boss shrugged off his comments labelling Herrera as “a poor-disciplined colleague and ill-judged”.

In Argentina, tensions are hotting up in the lead-up to this weekend’s clásico in Buenos Aires - perhaps

the most colourful and high-profile derby in world football. The River Plate-Boca Juniors derby is still three weeks away but River Plate’s impressive form of late is a pleasing sign for its faithful fans.

Before they host arch-rivals Boca Juniors at the Monumental in the first Superclasico since River lost 2-0 at La Bombonera in May 2011 and were relegated a month later, River’s last home win in the top flight was a 1-0 victory over Banfield in April 2011. They lost their next home game to Godoy Cruz and began the downhill slide towards relegation.

River, who spent last season in the second tier, had gone 10 top-flight matches without a win at the Monumental - six at the end of the 2010/11 season and the first four of this season. This time around, River last weekend beat Godoy Cruz 5-0 and have suddenly clicked, scoring nine goals in two matches while conceding none, adding to Sunday’s five-goal spree to last weekend’s 4-0 victory at title holders Arsenal.

With each successive goal on Sunday, a heaving Monumental chant-



John Van’t Schip show he’s still all heart

ed River’s favourite anti-Boca songs anticipating their next home match - the biggest club game on the Argentine football calendar. Boca’s 3-1 loss at Belgrano in Cordoba earlier in the day made Sunday’s victory all the sweeter for River’s fans.

Despite the margin of victory, River rode their luck at times with Godoy Cruz hitting the bar in the third minute and coming dangerously close with another early chance.

Coach Matias Almeyda appears to have finally hit on a successful counter-attacking formula which brought an opening goal in the ninth minute for midfielder Martin Aguirre from Rodrigo Mora’s low cross to the near post. River’s key player, central midfielder Leonardo Ponzio, then marked his 100th game for the club with a cheeky goal from a free-kick 35 yards out three minutes later.

With goalkeeper Nelson Ibáñez expecting a cross into the middle Ponzio found the top corner of the net with a curling shot to put River 2-0 up. “We deserved something like this at our ground. We won well against tough opponents,” Almeyda said.

River lost Leonardo Ponzio with a twisted ankle on the stroke of half-time but retained their shape with Aguirre moving into the centre and young playmaker Manuel Lanzini coming in on the left.

Winger Carlos Sánchez ran onto substitute Rogelio Funes Mori’s pass to score the third just past the hour and Mora netted the fourth in the 63rd minute after Ibáñez spilled a cross.

Sánchez saved the best for last, lobbing Ibáñez from the edge of the box in the 75th minute as River climbed to eighth with 15 points from 10 games just past the halfway mark in the 19-match Inicial tournament, the first of two for season 2012/13.

Newell’s Old Boys are top with 22 points after their 1-0 home win over Vélez Sarsfield thanks to former Liverpool winger Maxi Rodríguez’s goal after 30 seconds. Racing Club are second with 20 points after thumping San Lorenzo 4-0 with Belgrano third on 19 and defeated sides Vélez and Boca Juniors fourth with 17.

tional duty. “It’s also going to be warmer up there than what it is in Melbourne. There are no easy games in the A-League so we have to be ready,” Allsopp said. “There will probably be two angry sides out on the field.”

After coming on as the first substitute against Heart, Allsopp and fellow attacker Theo Markelis are likely to come into Postecoglou’s starting front third as replacements for Thompson and Rojas. Allsopp plans to use the Roar match to cement his position in the starting 11.

“Everyone wants to play as much as they can. I will try to play to my strengths and not think too much about the week after,” he said.

Neuman and Marcelo Carrusca) are actually surprised at the pace, the tempo and the technical and physical aspects of the game in Australia - it’s really progressed. “It’s not an easy league to play in, it’s a tough league.

“I didn’t see that much of the Sydney game but in terms of that one it’s always difficult to go to Wellington and get a result - I don’t care who you have in your team. “Wellington are a hard team to play against over there, real hard team and I think history proves that point. “As for Western Sydney they were very unlucky to not have sacored ... Matty Ryan (Central Coast goalkeeper) kept them out, and Ono only came on in the game late.”

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Postecoglou puts Victory through their paces

An angry Ange Postecoglou put Melbourne Victory through a brutal training session ahead of their crucial clash against his old side Brisbane Roar.

Both the Roar and Victory will take losing form into the grudge match at Suncorp Stadium on Saturday night after respective losses to Perth Glory and Melbourne Heart on the A-League’s opening weekend. Postecoglou stood abruptly in the middle of Gosch’s Paddock for most of Victory’s high-tempo training session on Tuesday as assistant coaches viciously barked instructions at the players.

Striker Danny Allsopp said Postecoglou’s mood reflected the frame of mind he had been in since Friday

night’s 2-1 loss to Heart.

“It was punishing. That has been standard for us in pre-season,” Allsopp told reporters.

“He was obviously disappointed and said the same things to the supporters as he did to us.

“He made his message after the game loud and clear and the boys have taken it pretty tough. They are hurting because (the loss) didn’t really reflect the work we put in over the off season.”

The perfect way to get back in Postecoglou’s good books would be to snare three points against the A-League title holders.

But it will be a difficult task for a team who will lose Archie Thompson, Mark Milligan and Marco Rojas to interna-

Kosmina defends A-League marqueees

Adelaide United coach John Kosmina has defended the A-League’s marquee signings after they failed to fire in the opening round of the season.

Although showing glimpses of their undeniable talent, Alessandro Del Piero, Emile Heskey and Shinji Ono were unable to have a notable impact over the weekend. Del Piero’s flashes of brilliance were not enough to spare Sydney FC from suffering a 2-0 loss away to the Wellington Phoenix, while Heskey could do little to prevent Newcastle Jets falling to a 2-0 defeat to Kosmina’s side. Ono looked sharp in his 25-minute cameo for Western Sydney Wanderers, but the A-League’s youngest club had to settle for a 0-0 draw

against the Central Coast Mariners. While a few eyebrows were raised as to why \$3.5 million worth of talent did not ignite in the opening round, Kosmina jumped to the players’ defence. The 56-year-old said it was crucial onlookers of the A-League were patient with the competition’s marquee icons as they look to find their feet and reach peak fitness. “You’ve got to look at the physical aspect or the fitness aspect of the marqueees at the moment,” Kosmina said. “None of them have had a full pre-season campaign. They’ve been doing their training back in their home countries, but it’s not the real thing.

“I know our imports (Jeronimo

Roma Calling



By Samuel Collins

La Repubblica were in no doubt. "Inter are in the running for this Scudetto", the Italian daily screamed.

It follows Inter Milan's victory in the Derby della Madonnina – Milan derby – where Andrea Stramaccioni's men secured their third consecutive league win against their great rivals. AC Milan now haven't won this fixture since April 2011, when a brace from Alexandre Pato, and a penalty from Antonio Cassano sealed an impressive 3-0 thumping. How Massimiliano Allegri could do with both forwards right now. Instead, Pato has yet to play a single minute this season, suffering a groin injury pre-season, whilst Cassano is now, of course, with the Nerazzurri. Not that the Milan faithful let it go unnoticed; A derogatory banner in the San Siro read "Cassano traitor, give us back the defibrillator" – a reference to the Italian striker's heart surgery last season, when the 30-year old admitted "I thought I would die". It wasn't quite what Inter striker Diego Milito meant when he told the Rossoneri fans

Inter win Derby della Madonnina & ignite Scudetto chances



It's all smiles for Inter Milan, as it keeps in touch with the pacesetters and considers itself a realistic Serie A title contender this season.

pre-game to jeer his team-mate, and it left a real sour taste in the mouth.

Another disappointment before kick-off were the empty seats. The San Siro holds 80,000, but only 40,155, to be precise, attended the 279th Milan derby. Half of the historical, if crumbling, stadium was bare. It was so bad, even Milan skipper Massimo Ambrosini had to plea with the red and

black fans earlier this week to come to cheer his side on.

On the pitch, it was Inter who took all three points, thanks to Walter Samuel's third-minute winner. Remarkably, the experienced Argentine has now won all ten Milan derbies in his career. Esteban Cambiasso's teasing free-kick eluded everyone, including Milan keeper Christian

Abbiati – who really isn't that good in the air – and Samuel leapt above rookie defender Mattia De Sciglio to head home. 1-0. And it stayed that way, for the remaining 87 minutes, despite everything Milan – who were the designated 'home' side – threw at Stramaccioni's side. Milan had 60% possession, more shots on target, more shots off target,

more corners and more offside. They were "unlucky" as Allegri told Sky Italia shortly after. "The referee affected the game," the under pressure coach raged, before running through all of the "errors" Paolo Valeri committed. He was right. Riccardo Montolivo's long-range effort was disallowed for, well, nothing. Urby Emanuelson supposedly fouled Sami Handanovic, the Inter keeper, but as Allegri said "I have no idea why it was ruled out." The 4-2-3-1 formation, which worked well in Milan's mid-week victory at Zenit, looked purposeful again here. But with the man at the spearhead of that, Bojan Krkic, had an evening to forget, seemingly trying to score from 30 yards for the 90 minutes. Robinho, making his fourth successive appearance from the bench since returning from a leg injury, threatened to score or create an equaliser, but failed, whilst Giampaolo Pazzini, who swapped clubs with Cassano during the summer, missed a wonderful opportunity late on by centimeters. Inter full-back Yuto Nagatomo's dismissal just after half-time couldn't even help Milan.

For AC, the future looks grim, even if Pato did score twice in a reserve game on Monday. The departures of several familiar names in the summer, as owner Silvio Berlusconi cleared the wage bill in anticipation for Financial Fair Play, unsettled the club. It was somewhat ironic,

that as Milan fired blanks for the fourth time in nine games this season, Zlatan Ibrahimovic was scoring two wonder goals for PSG – the Swede left Milan for the Parisians in July. But for Inter, the outlook appears a lot brighter.

The 2010 treble winners were to be admired, by the end of the game. They defended brilliantly, even if they had some fortune throughout. And, when Stramaccioni ran on to the field at full-time to salute the fans, memories of a certain Jose Mourinho came to mind. "I'm nobody," the 36-year old replied to Inter owner Massimo Moratti's 'Special one' comparison. Since alternating to a 3-5-2 formation after the 2-0 home defeat to Siena, Inter have won all four fixtures. "We've found the best system," Stramaccioni admitted on local radio on Sunday. Inter are fourth in Serie A, four points off leaders Juventus and Napoli. The visit to Turin next month to tackle the unbeaten champions – undefeated in 46 league games now – looks like being the hottest show in town.

Centre-back Andrea Ranocchia has re-found his form, propelling himself back into the Italian national squad. "It's not down to me," Ranocchia told reporters at the San Siro, "It's down to Stramaccioni!" Carry on like this, and the Mourinho-Stramaccioni comparisons won't be ending any time soon.



By Alex Milic

SERBIA
Red Star Belgrade suffered their first loss in the Super-

Liga this season following a shocking first half performance against struggling Spartak in Subotica. The home side scored three first half goals to get the three points while the 'Red and Whites' failed to cause any troubles for the home side.

The loss has put Partizan on top of the table, the defending champions edged out Javor 2:1, and now the 'Black and Whites' have a two point advantage on top of the standings. Third place is still occupied by the impressive FK Rad, who also lost their first match of the season against strugglers OFK Beograd. Smederevo and Radnicki 1923 are on the foot of the table without a win to their names this season.

In Round 9, Red Star welcomes BSK Borca and will hope to bounce back with a win following last week's disastrous performance. The match of the round is between third place Rad and league leaders Partizan.

The Serbia U21s take on England in a two leg play-off for the European U21 Championships while the Senior team has two crucial World Cup Qualifiers.

The following players have been called up for the World Cup 2014



Sinisa

Qualifiers against Belgium and FYR Macedonia.

CROATIA

Dinamo Zagreb looks set to dominate the Croatian League once more, following eleven rounds the defending champions have a seven point lead over second placed Slaven Kopriwnica, While Hajduk and three more teams share third place with 18 points.

In the top of the table clash in Round 11, Dinamo thrashed Slaven in Koprivnica 4:1 to stamp their authority on Croatian football while Hajduk also had a convincing win, they 'Whites' were too storn for Cibalia scoring four unanswered goals.

In Round 12, Dinamo takes on city rival Inter, Slaven awaits Cibalia while Hajduk welcomes Istra to the Poljud Stadium. The National Team takes on Macedonia and Wales in World Cup 2014 Qualifiers.

Del Bosque makes no apologies over Spain selection

Vicente del Bosque insists that he will pick the best players available to him, even if that means dropping renowned stars.

Chelsea's Juan Mata and Athletic Bilbao's Fernando Llorente were among those who failed to make Spain's latest 23-man squad for their 2014 World Cup qualifiers.

And the 61-year-old adopted a pragmatic response to those questioning his selection.

"We have 23 players which I think are a lot for two matches, but we have to cover any possible eventuality," he said.

"We aren't here to please people, but to field the best team."

When questioned about Mata's absence, Del Bosque explained that it was an area where Spain had an abundance of quality.

"It's due to competition for places. He (Mata) plays in an area where we have a lot of players," he said.

"I can't think of another excuse. He's playing very well in the Premier League."

FIFA: Diving becoming a 'cancer' in football

FIFA vice-president Jim Boyce believes that diving is becoming a 'cancer' to the game and wants the issue to be dealt with more swiftly in the future.

Liverpool striker Luis Suarez was at the centre of a diving furore in last weekend's 0-0 draw with Stoke, and the issue has since become a hot topic.

In the aftermath of the game, Stoke manager Tony Pulis called for players to be banned for three matches if they have been deemed guilty of diving.

The FA currently does not allow retrospective punishments to be handed to players guilty of diving.

The issue has been discussed by the FA, the Premier League and the

Football League before, but Boyce believes that it should be re-addressed and a change of policy is needed.

"I have seen several incidents recently, and I watched the latest Suarez incident two or three times, and to me it is nothing less than a form of cheating," he said.

"It is becoming a little bit of a cancer within the game and I believe if it is clear to everyone that it is simulation then that person is trying to cheat and they should be severely punished for that.

"It can be dealt with retrospectively by disciplinary committees, and it is done so in some associations, and I believe that is the correct thing to do. "It can at times be very, very difficult

for referees to judge whether something is a foul or a fair tackle and if players are diving then it makes their job even harder."

The Premier League has previously suggested a three-man panel to review contentious incidents after every weekend, which would include the issue of diving.

The Premier League would be open to renewing such discussions on putting such a system in place.

The FA have said they have often reviewed the issue.

"Simulation is not something that the FA currently take retrospective action over but it is an issue that is often reviewed and discussed by the game's stakeholders," an FA spokesman said.

Mascherano tips classic Uruguay clash

Javier Mascherano believes Argentina's World Cup qualifying clash with Uruguay on Friday could prove crucial to the final standings.

In the absence of 2014 hosts Brazil, Argentina sit top of the CONMEBOL table while their opponents are in the final automatic position of fourth, and the 28-year-old believes that a win over the Copa America champions will be a vital step towards qualification.

"Uruguay are a team that in recent years has gained good results and put in good performances and they've been playing together for a long time," Mascherano said after training on Tuesday.

"They reached the semi-final of the World Cup and won the Copa America. The matches are always hotly contested with them. It will be a classic and a very difficult match."

A win over the Uruguayans would give Alejandro Sabella's team a six-point cushion over Venezuela, who are just outside the qualification places, ahead of Tuesday's match against Chile, but Mascherano is eager to concentrate solely on Friday's match.

"We know we are leaders in the standings, and given that Venezuela don't have a fixture on Friday, the six-point gap would put us well on track for qualification," he said.

"The first thing to think about is Uruguay, knowing three more points to go to Chile with will give us confidence to win again."

The Barcelona star also spoke about the unfair pressure that coaches such as Sabella are under in Argentina, and suggested they should be afforded more time in which to piece together their projects.

"Maybe the Argentines are accustomed to pressure, especially coaches who are changed on a very fast cycle," he said.

"I think the managers' projects should be given more time, otherwise you're constantly changing and starting from scratch.

"In Europe they are probably given more time. Alex Ferguson has been at Manchester United for 25 years but in the first few years he didn't win any titles.

"Arsene Wenger hasn't won anything for seven or eight years but he is still at Arsenal. It happens because it is easier to change one manager than a whole squad."

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By Simon Pearson

Wayne Rooney eyes England leadership role

Wayne Rooney claims he wants to inspire England's younger players in the same way Eric Cantona did at Manchester United.

Rooney, who has 76 caps for his country, believes that as he must begin to show his leadership qualities at international level and is willing to offer advice to the younger personnel in Roy Hodgson's squad.

"I hope it is time for me to show I am a senior player and that I can lead the team. I understand the scrutiny I'm under and I have no problems with that," the United striker told reporters.

"Hopefully in the near future we will be coming out of a tournament and you will all be praising me because we have won a trophy. That would be great for everyone.

"It's especially important now, when we have a lot of young players in the squad. I always try to speak to them and offer advice.

"I always remember what Sir Alex Ferguson says about how Eric Cantona was such a big help to the younger players at United. It is something I can look at and try do for England, to try to help them. Hopefully I can bring the best out of them and they can bring the best out of me as well."

After being part of an England squad which suffered a quarter-final exit at the hands of Italy at Euro 2012, Rooney conceded his own performances at international level have struggled to live up to



Rooney shouldn't have too much trouble inspiring England against San Marino

expectations.

"Performance-wise, there have been times when I've not done myself justice. I always try to give everything, leave everything on the pitch," said Rooney.

"Sometimes it happens where you don't play well but you have tried. It just happens. Whether I have played well or badly. I always try to come off exhausted.

"I'd have liked to have played better for England. For whatever reasons it hasn't happened. I'd like to know why, because I've always worked hard and given everything.

"Looking back at games and tournaments, I know I can do better. Going into the next game, I always feel I am going to play well, and I'm confident. I wouldn't let the previous tournament or previous game distract me.

"I think I haven't played at my best but being honest as a team we can do better. So I am not going to win a tournament on my own. We need the whole team."

England will resume their World Cup qualification campaign on Friday with a home tie against San Marino and are currently second in Group H, level on four points with Montenegro and Poland after two games.

out out of the starting eleven, this year may be a little too much for Hughton and his side. The work rate won't be a problem, the quality and depth at Carrow Road will be, where home form may be their only life line.

Reading and QPR may fare a little better than their East-Anglian rivals. Some abject displays combined with some incredibly unlucky ones show a Reading side that may just produce more as the season goes on.

What the Royals do have is a pool of strikers to choose from. Scoring goals for a newly promoted side is half the battle and the big signing of Pavel Pogrebnyak has added to the depth of forwards already at the club including Jason Roberts, Adam Le Fondre and Noel Hunt.

Manager Brian McDermott will also have the ability to spend in the January transfer window thanks to the injection of money being provided by new Russian owner Anton Zingarevich. Although results do need to improve for Reading, you feel they will have a fighting chance of survival.

Meanwhile at Loftus Road, Mark Hughes' QPR have conceded 16 goals, scored a mere six times and prop up the rest of the table.

A crop of eleven players, including strangely two international goalkeepers have arrived over the summer. High calibre buys and and huge sums of money as well as big wages have been thrown at agents and players, bringing in the likes of Park Ji-Sung, Stephane M'Bia, Junior Hoilett and Jose Bosingwa.

Of those eleven players, one purchase stands out as a real coup for not only the club, but the Premier League as well. Esteban Granero was deemed surplus to requirements at one of only two clubs in Eu-

Coyle sacking devastates Muamba

Former Bolton midfielder Fabricio Muamba said he is devastated the club have sacked manager Owen Coyle.

The Championship outfit have managed just 11 points from 10 matches in the second tier after relegation from the Premier League last season, and sit in 18th place.

The owners reacted on Tuesday by removing the coach from his post, a position he has held for almost three years including a difficult period last term when Muamba was forced to retire after suffering a cardiac arrest.


Muamba said although he is sure the club will find a suitable replacement, he is still sad to see Coyle leave after the 46-year-old showed a lot of faith in him.

"Owen was very supportive to me and I am grateful for that," the ex-Arsenal midfielder told reporters.

"If you look at the start of the season, the guys have not been playing particularly well and the results have not been up to the standards we thought with the players we've got in the team.

"I was obviously devastated to see he was going but I am sure the club and the chairman will bring some-

ENGLAND EPL



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3 Manchester City	7	4	3	0	15	8	+7	15	W W D D W
4 Everton	7	4	2	1	14	8	+6	14	D W W D L
5 Tottenham Hotspur	7	4	2	1	13	8	+5	14	W W W W D
6 West Bromwich ...	7	4	2	1	11	7	+4	14	W D W L W
7 Arsenal	7	3	3	1	13	5	+8	12	W L D W W
8 West Ham United	7	3	2	2	8	8	+0	11	L W D D W
9 Fulham	7	3	1	3	15	11	+4	10	D L W W L
10 Newcastle United	7	2	3	2	8	11	-3	9	L D W D D
11 Swansea City	7	2	2	3	12	11	+1	8	D L L L D
12 Stoke City	7	1	5	1	6	5	+1	8	D W L D D
13 Sunderland	6	1	4	1	5	7	-2	7	L W D D D
14 Liverpool	7	1	3	3	9	12	-3	6	D W L D L
15 Wigan Athletic	7	1	2	4	7	13	-6	5	D L L L D
16 Aston Villa	7	1	2	4	6	12	-6	5	L D L W D
17 Southampton	7	1	1	5	12	20	-8	4	D L W L L
18 Reading	6	0	3	3	8	13	-5	3	D D L L L
19 Norwich City	7	0	3	4	5	17	-12	3	L L D D D
20 QPR	7	0	2	5	6	16	-10	2	L L L D L

one in to get promoted because we need to get promoted.

"In football you make changes and sometimes that's good, sometimes it's bad. We just have to wait and see how the club react.

"Football is a results game and you get paid and picked if you play well. If you don't, you get out the team.

"For players it is the same as a manager. You stay in the job as long as the boys are performing for the team.

"I can understand exactly where the club came from, but at the end of the day he did a great job for the club and I am grateful to him."

Muamba has been keeping busy by attending many sporting events as a role model for young people. Although he is enjoying some time away from football, he indicated he would like to return to the game in some capacity, but ruled out coaching.

"I have just been enjoying life, spending time with my family," he added.

"I am writing a book at the moment, which will hopefully be out in November.

"I have been travelling as well but I never watch much football because I get really frustrated. As a professional, you get frustrated not being

involved.

Burgess: AFL harder than EPL Former Liverpool conditioning manager Darren Burgess says fitness coaches face a bigger challenge in the AFL than English Premier League.

Burgess recently stepped down after two years as head of fitness and conditioning at the Reds before joining Australian Rules club Port Adelaide as their high performance manager, a role he previously occupied before turning his attention to the round-ball code.

He told SEN while he understood many would question his move from the most-watched football league in the world back to the Australian Football League (AFL), he was relishing the prospect.

"What a lot of people don't realise is that for somewhere like the Premier League, the role of the fitness coach is a little bit different to what it is in the AFL," Burgess said.

"In the Premier League they play so many games that you're more or less restricted to warming up and trying to keep the reserves fit because the games take care of the senior players.

"Whereas back in the AFL, purely from a job point of view - I won't

Latest Results	Next Week
Man City 3 - 0 Sunderland	Tottenham Hotspur v Chelsea
Chelsea 4 - 1 Norwich City	Fulham v Aston Villa
Swansea City 2 - 2 Reading	Liverpool v Reading
WBA 3 - 2 QPR	Manchester Utd v Stoke City
Wigan Athletic 2 - 2 Everton	Swansea City v Wigan Athletic
West Ham 1 - 3 Arsenal	WBA v Manchester City
Southampton 2 - 2 Fulham	West Ham v Southampton
Liverpool 0 - 0 Stoke City	Norwich City v Arsenal
Tottenham 2 - 0 Aston Villa	Sunderland v Newcastle Utd
Newcastle Utd 0 - 3 Man Utd	QPR v Everton

One To Watch This Weekend...
It's all international qualifiers this week, so the normal hussle-bussle of league football will resume the following week. Time to get out the national flags and give them a right good flogging!

even go into the lifestyle differences between Liverpool and Australia there's a lot more riding on the fitness coaches.

"It was an outstanding period of my life to go over there and live the dream and work with a Premier League club. But the AFL's a little more challenging."

Burgess also leapt to the defence of Liverpool star Luis Suarez, who has come under criticism for going to ground too easily.

"Luis is very misunderstood," Burgess said.

"He is an absolute champion off the pitch and on the pitch. He's a family man, loyal to a fault and an absolute star.

"I've never seen any other player in any other sport that I've worked with bring (his intensity) every day at training. He's unbelievable."

"He has to win whether you're playing cards, Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit or a five-a-side. He just has to win and will do anything to win.

"I know on the pitch he gets some criticism and you can decide whether that's deserved or not, but I'd certainly rather have him on my team than against."

The Saints on the other hand may struggle to keep afloat.

The free flowing, attacking football that Nigel Adkins plays at StMary's will mean goals at both ends of the pitch. Rickie Lambert has started where he left off from last season with four goals to his name so far, giving Southampton that all important goal threat, whilst the additions of Nathaniel Clyne, Steven Davis and record signing Gaston Ramirez add genuine Premier League quality that may have been lacking in their promotion winning side.

Their defence is a serious worry though. Having already conceded 20 goals, more than any other side in the league, they may have to sacrifice their open style of football in favour of a more rigid defensive unit.

It's hard to see outside of the seven featured any other clubs being involved in this seasons relegation scrap. Only a catastrophic turn of events at West Brom and Swansea City will see them dragged into the battle. Both appear to have enough about them to avoid being sucked into the bottom three, especially a Baggies side that arguably have the best set of strikers to choose from outside of the 'big six'.

For the first time in years, all of the candidates for the drop have that one player that can produce something out of nothing to win those all important games. Whether it's a Grant Holt for Norwich or a Darren Bent for Villa, no side looks as if they will be cast away by December.

So if you support any of these clubs, check that fixture on the last day of the season. It looks as if you're in it for the long haul.

London Eye



By Robert Davis

With the top of the table starting to take shape in the Premier League this year (we all knew West Bromwich Albion would be challenging the top six), the bottom of the table is still proving a bit of a dilemma.

Reading, Norwich City and Queens Park Rangers currently fill the bottom three spots seven games into the campaign, the only three teams without a win in the top flight this season. Which isn't exactly a surprise considering one has just come up from the Championship, another has a new manager with big boots to fill, and the other has a completely new squad.

Out of the three, you would have to look at Norwich as one of the sides who won't leave that danger zone. Chris Hughton took over a side that on paper, over performed last term under the once popular, now not so Paul Lambert.

Hughton did strengthen his side all over the pitch throughout the pre-season. Sebastian Bassong arrived from Tottenham Hotspur whilst Championship sweethearts Robert Snodgrass and Jacob Butterfield took their well deserved step up to the Premier League from Leeds United and Barnsley.

With only five goals scored and Grant Holt consistently being left



rope where that could possibly happen. Real Madrid parted ways with the 25-year-old who chose Loftus Road as his choice of destination, which I'm sure is down to the 'great project' Mark Hughes has at QPR.

Granero is an unbelievable talent and someone who can be the difference between a relegation battle and mid-table obscurity for a club like QPR. It would have to be an unbelievably bad season for Rangers to get relegated, yet there have been worse sides relegated over the years.

So what of the other teams currently not occupying the bottom three? Southampton, Wigan Athletic, West Ham United and Aston Villa may all be looking over their shoulder in the next few weeks as the league begins to take shape going into October.

One thing that is certain will be Wigan's near death experience with

relegation, then sudden miraculous escape with three games remaining, needing to beat Manchester City 58-0 to give them any chance of survival. Which of course will be achieved thanks to the modern day Houdini that is Roberto Martinez.

Aston Villa fans will count themselves unlucky to be included in a possible relegation scrap, especially since they rid of Alex McCleish and brought in Lambert from Norwich. The moral for the side in Claret and Blue has been low for a few seasons and the club needs a big change in direction. Like QPR, it will take a lot for Villa to go down. A big enough squad with enough quality, plus the return of some good football provided by Lambert will bring back the fans and the atmosphere to Villa Park.

The other two newly promoted sides along with Reading have had

different fortunes seven games in.

Southampton have picked up just the one win at home to Villa and sit just above the relegation zone, whilst the Hammers sit comfortably in eighth position after some impressive wins against Fulham and QPR in recent weeks.

Sam Allardyce may still be trying to win over the Upton Park crowd, but in him they have a manager who has seen it all before and more importantly, knows how to grind out results at the highest level.

A not so healthy looking defence may see the London club come unstuck against quality opposition, even if at this moment in time they have one of the better defensive records in the league. The players they possess in midfield and up front, including the surprise inclusion of Andy Carroll should see them looking up instead of down.



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